

Famine threatens 30 million Africans

ROME (AP) — A U.N. report warned Tuesday that spreading famine in Africa will cause "widespread deaths" this year unless there is a rapid, major increase in food aid. As many as 30 million Africans risk malnutrition and starvation, said the Rome-based U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation. The report said 5.7 million tons of food are needed to aid African countries troubled by drought, civil war and its resulting refugee crises, population growth and flagging agricultural economies. But donor countries and organisations have pledged only 3.4 million tons of food, it said. "Unless there is a massive acceleration of the flow of food aid to the affected populations, we are going to see widespread deaths from starvation from now and the next harvest at the end of the year," said Edouard Saouma, the FAO's director-general. The Organisation said donors in recent months have been channeling their efforts into helping victims of the devastating cyclone in Bangladesh and Kurdish refugees in the wake of the Gulf war. Food shortages in the Soviet Union and some Eastern European countries have also distracted attention from Africa.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرائي

Palestinian businessmen vote

HEBRON, occupied West Bank (AP) — Hebron's businessmen voted Tuesday in the broadest election allowed by Israel in the occupied West Bank in 15 years and one seen as a test for democracy for Palestinians. The election was supposedly non-political, but one man said he voted for the Muslim party Hamas. Another said he checked with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to see if he could take part. While the vote was only for a chamber of commerce board, Israeli officials have said they were watching it as a guide for allowing similar balloting elsewhere or even a renewal of municipal elections last held in 1976. No violence was reported as about 1,700 businessmen lined up to vote at a girls' secondary school in this city of 80,000 population, a seat of Muslim conservatism. Israeli policemen and soldiers watched from about 20 metres away. Results were not expected until early Wednesday.

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Abu Taleb visits U.S.

AMMAN (Petra) — Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb left Amman Tuesday for the United States on an official visit during which he will hold talks with military officials on matters of interest to the Armed Forces.

41 killed in Chilean mudslide

ANTOFAGASTA, Chile (AP) — A mudslide triggered by torrential rains slammed into a slum neighbourhood in this northern desert city early Tuesday, killing at least 41 people and injuring 650, officials said. Interior Minister Enrique Krauss told reporters in Santiago, the capital, that 41 bodies were recovered, including those of 13 children.

Polisario prepared for referendum

ALGIERS (R) — Polisario guerrilla chiefs and political leaders are holding strategy talks before a referendum aimed at bringing peace to the Western Sahara after almost 10 years of war, the Algerian news agency APS said Tuesday. Nearly 2,000 delegates are attending the meeting which opened Monday night at a refugee camp in southern Algeria.

Arafat meets Lebanese mediator

TUNIS (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat met Lebanese mediator Mohsen Ibrahim in Tunis Tuesday to discuss the situation in South Lebanon, where Palestinian guerrillas have refused to disarm. It is the third time since the beginning of April that Mr. Ibrahim, head of the Communist Action Organisation, has been to Tunis to mediate over a Lebanese government request that the guerrillas hand in their weapons.

Canada nears Iraqi grain deal

OTTAWA (R) — Canada has reached a tentative deal to resume grain sales to Iraq and is discussing a new long-term agreement with the Soviet Union, government officials said Monday. "A tentative deal has been reached with Iraq," said a spokeswoman for the Canadian Wheat Board, the government wheat marketing agency. But she said the deal depends on Iraq's ability to pay. Iran was Canada's fourth largest market for wheat and other grains before exports were halted after it invaded Kuwait last August and the United Nations imposed trade sanctions. The Security Council's Sanctions Committee recently permitted the 31 nations which have more than \$3.75 billion in Iraqi assets frozen in their banks to release necessary funds so Baghdad could buy food, medicine and other essential supplies. According to a letter from Iraq, Baghdad has \$2.73 billion in Canadian banks.

Three die in battle between Druze clans

BEIRUT (R) — Three members of one family were killed Tuesday when a feud between two Druze clans erupted in machinegun fire in central Lebanon, security sources said. They said the fighting involved the Sayyeh and Banna clans in the mountainous village of Smaron, 25 kilometres east of Beirut.

Bombs explode in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (AP) — Explosions rocked three Istanbul neighbourhoods Tuesday, causing extensive damage but no casualties, police and news reports said. An outlawed leftist Turkish organisation claimed responsibility, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported. The blasts occurred at a state-owned iron and steel works, a manufacturers' association and the offices of the Turkish state monopolies. Shortly after the blasts, an anonymous caller to local newspapers claimed responsibility in the name of the Turkish Communist Party Marxist-Leninist Organisation.

New government could be announced today or tomorrow

Masri in intense contacts with potential cabinet colleagues

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Consultations continued Tuesday between Prime Minister-designate Taher Masri and the different parliamentary blocs as well as independent personalities to form a government which would include about 10 Lower House deputies but will exclude the Muslim Brotherhood movement.

Deputies who met with Mr. Masri on Tuesday morning and in the evening told the Jordan Times that they were left with the impression that the prime minister-designate had not made up his mind on the final make-up of the government or if he had he was not telling them.

The Muslim Brotherhood movement, which held five ministerial posts in Prime Minister Mudar Badran's government, however, was the only grouping which declared itself to be largely opposed to participation in the new cabinet viewed as a "peace process government."

Earlier predictions by analysts pointed to the difficult task Mr. Masri would have if he chooses to accommodate the Brotherhood's demands for participation in the government or form a broad-based parliamentary government.

One or two other ultra-nationalist members of parliament, who also demand the complete liberation of all Palestine, are also expected to boycott Mr. Masri's government.

On Monday evening and Tuesday, the premier-designate met an array of parliamentary blocs and independent

technocrats in a bid to formulate a common ground leading to the formation of a government possibly today or tomorrow.

Sources close to Mr. Masri say that he is interested in forming a government which would represent the different colours of the political spectrum in the country but also with an element of professionalism.

"He wants to form a national coalition government even if he brings in ministers who are not from the parliament itself," one source said.

A Brotherhood source told the Jordan Times that his party is "most likely to stay out of this government because of the differing positions on a solution to the Palestinian problem."

"We will not join a government that is going to search for peace with Israel," the source said.

News agencies quoted Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader Mohammad Abdul Rahman Khalifa as saying

that "negotiations with the aides of Israel (the United States) are useless because America, before Israel, wants to Judaize Palestine and offer it to the international Zionists."

The Brotherhood has long opposed Jordan's standing policy that any Arab-Israeli settlement should be based on United Nations Resolution 242 and 338, which call for Israeli withdrawal from the land it occupied in 1967 in exchange for peace with the Arabs.

Mr. Masri, some sources say, may not even be interested in forming a government which would include the Brotherhood movement anyway.

Sources say that since Mr. Masri was aware of the differences between Jordan's policy on the peace process and the Brotherhood's he may have, therefore, created an equation which would exclude them and still allow

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8 more face death in Kuwait

KUWAIT (Agencies) — A martial law court sentenced seven stateless Arabs and one Iraqi to death on Tuesday for allegedly collaborating with Iraqi occupation forces.

Only two of those sentenced to hang — the Iraqi man and one of the stateless Arabs known in Kuwait as "bedoun" — were in court. The remainder were sentenced in their absence.

It brought the total of death sentences to 21 since the trials of more than 200 suspected collaborators began on May 24. Three of those are women.

The two who appeared in court showed no reaction when the sentence was passed.

Human rights groups and some Western governments have expressed concern about the conduct of the trials. Jordan has called for international action to halt the execution of convicted Jordanians and Palestinians.

Germany has urged Kuwait not to carry out the death sentences passed on people found guilty of "collaboration" with the Iraqis.

Dieter Kastrup, state secretary in the Foreign Ministry, told Kuwaiti ambassador Khalid Al Babin that Bonn regarded the death sentences passed as a violation of the U.N. convention on human rights.

"The government expects that death sentences already passed will not be carried out and that no further ones will be passed," a Foreign Ministry statement quoted Mr. Kastrup as saying.

"In the death sentences the government sees a breach of the United Nations convention on human rights and demands that a minimum of legal standards be respected in future trials," he said.

An international group representing journalists' rights has urged French President Francois Mitterrand to help save six newspaper employees condemned to death by Kuwait.

"The progress of the trials... gravely violates the principles of international rights, especially the declaration of human rights adopted by the United Nations."

The French-based Reporters Sans Frontieres wrote.

"In light of the severity of the sentences... we request your intervention with the appropriate authorities to obtain the commutation of their sentence and a fair trial," the group wrote in a letter to Mr. Mitterrand.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) denounced the death sentences handed to Palestinians in Kuwait and appealed for international help to protect them.

"The Palestinian people have spent their lives in building Kuwait when it was a desert, and used their expertise and technical know-how in all fields," the PFLP said in a statement issued in Damascus.

"But now, they are exposed to torture and assault without any guilt on their part, apart from remaining in Kuwait, which was deserted by its people at the time of the Iraqi aggression."

The PFLP leader, George

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Iraq assails Security Council for 'blackmail' over sanctions

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq's United Nations envoy has accused Security Council members of using blackmail to maintain the trade ban on Baghdad and said his country was a victim of international terrorism.

"Ambassadors of permanent members of the (U.N.) Security Council led by the U.S. are using a sort of overt blackmail to maintain the economic ban on Iraq," Abdul Amir Al Anbari told local newspapers in remarks published Tuesday.

"This is a clear violation of resolutions adopted against Iraq," he said.

He said Iraq had complied with all conditions in Security Council Resolution 687 which set cease-fire terms of the Gulf war and had hoped the next move would be a lifting of the embargo.

Instead, the Security Council members "began laying down new conditions and demanding their implementation before lifting the ban," Mr. Anbari said.

Washington insists that the trade embargo, imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August of last year, will remain as long as President Saddam Hussein is in power.

The Security Council Monday adopted two more resolutions, one demanding that Baghdad pay the full costs of scrapping weapons of mass destruction and the other maintaining an open ended arms embargo.

The newspaper Al Jumhuriyah said Washington was "luring and inciting other countries in the region to maintain the economic siege imposed on Iraq."

"Iraq is the biggest victim of international terrorism," Mr. Anbari said. "The attack launched by America and its allies (in the Gulf war) on hospitals, schools and religious and cultural sites... constitutes the biggest terrorist crime in the world."

Diplomats at the U.N. asserted Monday Iraq has far more chemical weapons than the 11,000 warheads, shells and bombs it told the world body about and more ballistic missiles than the 52 Scuds it acknowledged possessing.

The disclosure follows charges that Iraq also concealed nuclear weapons-development sites, U.S. officials say a "defecting" Iraqi nuclear scientist told them about a secret nuclear laboratory near the northern city of Mosul.

U.N. officials said Monday experts from a U.N. special commission should inspect the Mosul site by the end of June. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

One of the resolutions passed Monday stresses that the special commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have the authority to destroy or remove Iraq's weapons of mass

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Iraq frees Briton

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — A British engineer sentenced to life on spying charges was freed Tuesday, in the latest concession by Iraq to allied demands.

Information Ministry spokesman Saadoun Janabi said President Saddam Hussein ordered the release of Douglas Brand, 51, in response to an appeal by former British Prime Minister Edward Heath.

He said Mr. Brand was freed in Baghdad Tuesday morning, but would give no other details.

However, sources close to the ministry said Mr. Brand left by car for Jordan at 2 p.m. (1000 GMT) a drive which normally takes 10-12 hours, depending on the security and traffic at the border points.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported that President Saddam has ordered the release of Mr. Brand and instructed authorities to "allow him to leave Iraq... to rejoin his family."

INA said that the president made the decision in "appreciation for the fair stands of the former British prime minister, Edward Heath, during the Gulf crisis."

Mr. Heath was one of a few Westerners who visited Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August last year. He succeeded at the time in convincing Iraq to release some of the westerners it was holding detainees against attack against the country.

The move to free Mr. Brand was the latest in a series of compromises made by Iraq in the hope the West would ease United Nations sanctions.

But British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Mr. Brand's release was not enough to allow the easing of sanctions.

He told the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Britain also wanted Iraq to free British businessman Ian Richardson, jailed for economic corruption in 1986, agree to destroy its weapons of mass destruction and pay compensation for the damage it caused by invading Kuwait.

According to the 74-year-old Heath, president Saddam wrote to him saying he was prepared to free former British royal marines officer if asked.

territories and stopped building new settlements.

In response, Mr. Shamir vowed to continue the settlement drive and dismissed the idea that U.S. aid could be threatened.

The possibility of a fight over the loan request is already beginning to worry Israel's supporters.

Thomas Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the pro-Israel lobbying group, recently called on members to fight en masse to link the \$10 billion to Israel's settlement policy.

"We cannot allow anyone to hurt one million Eastern Europeans and 40,000 Ethiopian Jews to score an unrelated debating point or express a complaint about an unrelated policy difference, it would not be fair," he told a meeting with some major AIPAC donors, according to partici-

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Government change seen as a 'useful exercise' in democracy

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Opinions in Jordan largely differed on explaining the new change in government, although expected by most for some time, but there was a general consensus that the transition from Mr. Mudar Badran to Mr. Taher Masri as head of government will prove to be a useful exercise in democracy.

A random survey conducted by the Jordan Times Tuesday found wide support for the continuing democratisation process and hope that the new government would follow in the footsteps of the outgoing cabinet and further institutionalise Jordan's budding democracy.

Dr. Ali Kamal, head of the Psychiatry Department at the University of Jordan, said that although the new government is bound to face many difficulties, it should not compromise its stance on many important issues, mainly democracy.

"Jordan is emerging out of heavy clouds, and it should emerge without sacrificing its stance especially on democracy," Dr. Kamal told the Jordan Times.

Omar Fahmi Naha, a 22-year-old merchant from Amman, said: "I think

that Mr. Badran's government worked very hard and wholeheartedly accepted a lot of criticism from Parliament in line with the new phase of democracy."

Advertisement executive Talal Karran, 38, said he believed that the main priority of the new government should include "rearranging the Jordanian household."

"Dealing with the internal issues at home such as democracy, cancelling all martial laws, and dealing foremost with unemployment should be the priority for the new government," Mr. Karran said.

Abdullah Abu Farhan, a 74-year-old merchant from Bagha's camp popularly known as "Abu Kifah," said that if the new government's intention is to enhance democracy in Jordan it should "work at guaranteeing freedom of opinion, through allowing political parties to emerge and operate freely."

"I hope that the new government will be more successful than the previous one in combating unemployment," said Ahmad Hassan Abdul Kader, 25, manager of a public hall in the capital. He added that he felt that this should be one of the priorities of the new government. "The only way we can get over this unemployment is

by replacing foreign workers with Jordanians."

Many others felt that the sudden change in government was brought about by a combination of factors including the political course of the country in view of the ongoing efforts to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem and a need to curb what one described as "extremist trends of some groups in the country."

These groups, said Dr. Sari Nasir, a sociologist, should be curtailed by the new government "since they might disrupt the basic norms of our society."

"The government must make sure there is a choice for people by bringing about slow transformation," Dr. Nasir said.

According to Dr. Kamal, Mr. Masri's appointment will help "advance the peace process, especially through the formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation."

"Personally I think the choice implies that he would not give way to any form of pressure," Dr. Kamal said. "In relation to the peace process Jordan is a vital element," he added.

Bagha's Abu Kifah said: "The aim

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Arson could be linked to Petra Bank case

By Ahmad Kreishan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a dramatic development believed to be related to the ongoing Petra Bank trials, unknown assailants burnt the car of the first witness in the case, Yousef Al Salem, while it was parked in front of his home in the Marj Al Hamam district west of Amman.

Police sources said that the car was Monday night drenched with fuel before it was set on fire. The vehicle was completely damaged.

According to the sources, police investigating the incident to identify those responsible for the attack. They told the Jordan Times and Al Rai that the incident could be linked to the testimony Mr. Salem gave during the military court trials.

The military court examining the Petra Bank case Tuesday heard a testimony by a second witness who testified that the bank employees had offered 20 Jordanian firms a total of JD 116

million in credit facilities without proper approval from the bank's board or the Central Bank of Jordan and without other guarantees to protect the bank's rights.

The witness, Al Hajj Al Labadi, told the court that one of the credit facilities was offered by the bank's general manager, Ahmad Chalabi, in person to a company under the name of "the Petra Company for International Trade and Supply."

In this particular instance, the bank gave JD 3.75 million without approval from the Central Bank or the bank's board of directors, the witness said. "The only collateral given for these facilities were 1.216 million shares of the company, which was already indebted to Petra Bank," he said.

The witness said that investigation into the bank's papers revealed that first defendant Chalabi held the main responsibility for granting facilities to the customers because he did that without referring to the board and in total

disregard to adverse recommendations given by heads of the bank's branches in this matter.

The witness, a member of a government committee set up by the prosecutor general to help in the investigation, said that bank facilities exceeding JD 500,000 must be supported by an approval from the Central Bank before being released.

The witness referred to a number of cases in which employees were being tried for their responsibility for the bank's collapse and said they too used to give credit facilities without proper guarantees that would safeguard the shareholders' interests.

The witness also revealed that Mr. Chalabi had offered facilities to local moneychangers totalling JD 19 million in foreign currency deposited in foreign banks. He said when the moneychangers used to settle their debts they were allowed to pay in Jordanian currency and used to pay in cheques, but that most of the sums were not entered in to the books.

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Mubarak visits Kuwait, says Egypt to join security force

KUWAIT (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak left Kuwait on Tuesday after a brief fence-mending visit and confirmed his troops would join a planned Arab peacekeeping force for the Gulf.

"We shall discuss the requirements of our Arab brothers and take the appropriate accordingly. We agree in principle to take part in that force," the official Kuwaiti News Agency quoted him as saying.

It was Mr. Mubarak's first visit to the emirate since a U.S.-led multinational force, which included a 35,000-strong Egyptian contingent, pushed Iraq out in February.

Egypt said last month it was withdrawing its forces amid controversy over their role in the planned defence force.

Mr. Mubarak was greeted at the airport earlier on Tuesday by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and later held talks with him.

Cairo and Damascus, which contributed about 20,000 men to the U.S.-led coalition, had negotiated a security pact with the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states under which they would provide the backbone of a regional security force in return for Gulf Arab investment in their cash-starved economies.

The formation of the force was delayed by a reported row over the size and role of the Syrian and Egyptian forces and that of any Western troops in the post-war

Gulf.

Kuwait's crown prince was quoted as saying in remarks published on Monday that regional security lay in the presence of Arab troops, not Western ones.

"The hope (for security) lies, not in the presence of foreign troops, but in the agreement of the Gulf Cooperation Council with dear Egypt and sister Syria," Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah told the Cairo daily Al Akhbar.

Experts from Egypt, Syria and the GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain — met in Doha, Qatar, Monday to discuss the accord to prepare for next month's foreign ministers' meeting in Kuwait.

Kuwait said last week that it still felt threatened by Iraq.

"Their (the Iraqis') human and military resources outweigh by far those of Kuwait. If they don't have military might now they have the human resources which could cause us a headache," said Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah.

Western diplomats say talks on the make-up of the Arab defence force have progressed. One suggestion is that it comprise equal numbers of troops from Saudi Arabia and the other GCC states with smaller contingents from Egypt and Syria.

They said that the total force could number about 36,000 plus the Kuwaiti army to deter any fresh attack by Iraq which had a

million strong standing army when it invaded last August.

Mr. Mubarak's visit to Kuwait follows that of another of the emirate's saviours, Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, whose dramatically improving relations with Iraq have added a new factor to Gulf security.

Iraq, which was neutral in the Gulf war, is eager to play a key role in any regional security force and opposed any long-term foreign military presence in the Gulf.

Under pragmatic President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Iran is ending its self-imposed isolation. It is rapidly improving its relations with the Gulf states it was accused of trying to destabilise during Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's 10-year rule.

Western nations, including the United States, which provided most of the troops for Operation Desert Storm, are winding down their presence in the region.

Washington is understood to be setting up forward command headquarters in the Gulf where it is believed to have established weapons storage facilities in case of any future war in the region.

Arab states were furious at the disclosure that similar U.S. sites were being set up in Israel.

The Kuwait News Agency said Mr. Mubarak flew from Kuwait to Bahrain where he was met by the emir, Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa. Both visits were previously unannounced.

Liberation cost Kuwait \$22.6 billion

KUWAIT (R) — The liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation cost the emirate \$22.6 billion, Minister of Finance Nasser Abdullah Al Rodhan said in remarks published on Tuesday.

He told Kuwait's Al Qabas newspaper: "The total cost incurred by the state budget for the liberation of Kuwait reached \$22.6 billion."

"This figure is nothing compared to the return of Kuwait to its legitimate owners and the restoration of legitimacy."

The minister was thought to be referring to the cost of financing the U.S.-led multinational force that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation of the emirate in February.

Kuwait has said it will pay the United States total of \$18.5 billion for its contribution towards Operation Desert Storm, \$5 billion in 1990 and the rest in 1991.

The minister's brief statement did not make clear whether he was referring to the 1991 calendar year budget or this year's.

The cost of repairing war damage to infrastructure and the dousing of hundreds of oil wells set ablaze in the war is estimated at \$20 to \$30 billion.

Initial estimates were as high as \$150 billion but these have been scaled down because the extent of damage caused by bombing and sabotage was not as grave as originally thought.

Algerian government takes office under state of siege

ALGIERS (R) — A new Algerian government took office on Tuesday, replacing one sacked on June 5 after fundamentalist unrest. Several key figures have retained their posts but the majority are new.

With the country now under a state of siege, new Prime Minister Sid Ahmad Ghozali kept Major-General Khaled Nezzar as defence minister and left untouched the sensitive justice portfolio. In the hands of Ali Benflis.

"There is a core of continuity and experience which is very important under the state of siege. A lot of the other names are fairly unknown but Ghozali seems to have kept his word on forming a fairly neutral government," said one Western diplomat.

One commentator pointed to the absence of any leading members of the main political parties or people known to be close to the Islamic fundamentalist movement whose protests derailed general elections originally due on June 27.

The prime minister says the government's main task will be to prepare for free and fair general elections this year.

The main opposition Islamic Salvation Front, which led the protests, said the electoral laws were rigged in favour of the National Liberation Front, once Algeria's sole political party.

The leaders of two smaller Islamic parties, Nahdha and Hamas, had forecast before the announcement that Islamic and nationalist figures would dominate the new government.

Mr. Ghozali, 54, also named Algeria's first human rights minister, Ali Haroun, a lawyer and member of one of Algeria's two human rights leagues.

And in a break with tradition, though not a precedent, he brought a woman into office, Nafissa Lalliam, in charge of health.

Sadek Boussena, a former president, lost his job in charge of Algeria's gas and oil, the bedrock of its wealth.

But his replacement, Energy Minister Nordine Ait Laoussine is a technocrat with long experience. He was commercial director of the oil and gas giant Conoco when Mr. Ghozali ran it for 10 years. Mr. Laoussine later left and has been running a study centre in Geneva.

With the new government likely to be short-lived, because of parliamentary elections later this year, Mr. Ghozali's main success is seen as attracting Lakhdar Brahimi to the Foreign Ministry.

"Brahimi is very well respected internationally, at the United Nations and for his work in Lebanon. He is probably the

best known Algerian diplomat in the world today," said one Western diplomat.

The new foreign minister takes over Mr. Ghozali's old job in the Maloud Hamrouche administration, sacked two weeks ago when President Chadli Benjedid called in the army after clashes between police and the Muslim fundamentalist protesters.

At least 14 people were killed in the unrest. Western diplomats said the death toll was between 40 and 50.

Mr. Ibrahim is currently assistant secretary general with the Cairo-based Arab League. He was the main trouble-shooter for Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Morocco when they made up a league committee which helped end Lebanon's 16-year civil war.

His appointment is expected to help allay overseas concern about Algeria's future, evident in a message to Mr. Benjedid this week from Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti of Italy, Algeria's main trading partner. Italy has agreed to provide \$7.2 billion in credit to the North African country.

Andreotti said, "The (system) in Algeria concerns all countries, and particularly Italy..."

French commentators have also expressed fears about the impact of an Islamic fundamentalist state on the large Algerian community living there.

Moscow rejects report of missile deal with Israel

MOSCOW (R) — The foreign ministry has discounted reports that Soviet officials had offered to sell Israel a system to replace U.S. made missiles used to intercept Iraqi missiles in the Gulf war.

"I have no official information on this," ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin told a news briefing.

"I don't know what Soviet specialists might say in a personal capacity with representatives of other countries at an international event, but it is apparent that such a deal could not take place without due account of the Soviet government."

Israeli officials at the Paris air show on Sunday told Reuters that top Soviet specialists had offered to provide Israel with a system superior to the U.S.-made Patriot missile used to knock out Iraqi Scud missiles during the war.

Noah Shacher, spokesman for the Israeli defence ministry's arms development branch, said a manager of a Soviet state industrial corporation had made the offer during two meetings.

He said the offer was unprecedented and that the Soviet officials made clear that "everything (in their arsenal) is on the market."

Israelis ambush guerrilla squad in South Lebanon

TYRE, Lebanon (AP) — An Israeli army patrol ambushed guerrillas in South Lebanon early Tuesday, killed two of them and captured a third in an ensuing clash, security sources said.

They said a fourth guerrilla escaped and the Israelis launched a major search for him, but had not arrested him several hours later.

One of the sources said the identity and affiliation of the guerrillas was not known, but that "they apparently were on their way to attack a target inside Israeli territory."

Several Palestinian factions as well as Lebanese groups operate in South Lebanon. They are involved in an underground warfare against the border strip Israel has occupied since 1985.

But as the driver of the BMW was trying to manoeuvre a hairpin curve at high speed, the car overturned.

The guerrillas climbed out of the car and continued to fire at the Israelis. Two guerrillas were killed and the third was arrested in the four-hour battle.

The Israelis sealed off the region and sent foot patrols in search of the escapee.

The command of the 5,800-

strong UNIFIL went on alert and the peacekeepers retreated to bunkers and foxholes as the guerrillas and Israelis fought with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic rifles.

The sources said several rounds of rifle fire hit UNIFIL's field hospital, but there was no casualties or damage.

Israel controls the 1,100-square-kilometre "security zone" to guard against infiltrations into its northern settlements. The strip overlaps with UNIFIL's zone of operations.

'Mideast arms freeze discussed and rejected'

WASHINGTON (R) — A U.S. State Department official defended U.S. arms sales to the Middle East Monday and said a freeze on sales had been discussed and rejected.

Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly was responding to congressional critics of new sales at a time when the Bush administration, under prodding from Congress, has announced it will seek to control the regional arms race.

Pending legislation being debated in Congress would place a moratorium on U.S. sales of major weapons in the region while the United States sought to work out an international agreement

on controlling such exports.

"Why not say, 'let's stop right now sending conventional arms to the region?'" Democratic Representative Lee Hamilton of Indiana, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee, asked Mr. Kelly.

Mr. Kelly replied that the administration had had an internal discussion of a moratorium during the planning of a Middle East arms control initiative announced by President George Bush last month. But he said the idea was rejected because weapons were needed for defence.

The initiative is to be discussed by representatives of the United

States, Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union — The Permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — at a meeting in France next month.

Mr. Bush's announcement was followed by the disclosure that the United States intends to transfer new weapons to the region, including 20 Apache attack helicopters to the United Arab Emirates and eight to Bahrain.

Mr. Hamilton said these and other arms transfers undercut U.S. credibility on arms restraint.

The administration is planning a multi-billion dollar arms sale to Saudi Arabia that had been postponed last year.

Diehl McKalip, director of operations in the Defence Security Agency, said the sale would "probably look different" because of the president's arms control initiative and said details of Saudi needs would not be known before the autumn.

On other issues, Mr. Kelly said the United States had talked frequently to Kuwait about recovery from the Iraqi invasion.

He said U.S. officials had suggested full adult franchise in elections.

He also said the United States and the international community would be expected to act again in the Middle East to repel aggression if it recurred.

5 killed in ammunition blast in Lebanon

JOUNIEH, Lebanon (Agencies) — At least five people were killed and 20 wounded by a huge explosion at a militia ammunition dump in north Lebanon Tuesday, security sources said.

The explosion, near Jounieh was heard in Beirut 16 kilometres to the south. It was followed by up to a dozen smaller blasts lasting almost an hour.

Panic-stricken civilians ran along a road near the ammunition depot, screaming for help and news of missing relatives and friends, as black smoke billowed over the sea.

Security sources said the initial blast occurred as men of the rightwing Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) militia were loading ammunition from the underground depot onto trucks.

Shrapnel from exploding shells

and mortar bombs flew hundreds of metres from the wrecked depot.

The militia, led by Samir Geagea, blamed the blasts on an "act of sabotage" but did not accuse any particular group.

Niam Khalil, 43, the truck driver, said he did not know the fate of his seven colleagues who were loading the ammunition.

His face, hands and clothes were covered with black dust and he repeatedly choked while talking.

Mr. Khalil said the depot was in the basement of an unfinished building.

A dozen explosions shattered glass and inflicted some damage on cars in a three kilometres radius. Residents rushed to basements and bomb shelters as the

shells exploded.

Jean Pierre Daou, who was having lunch at a beach restaurant, said he first saw a "huge flash. It was like part of the sun. Then I heard the explosion."

As the witnesses were interviewed on the southern entrance to Maamletin, ambulances and fire engines with sirens wailing, sped to the area in an effort to evacuate casualties and combat the blaze.

A wooded hill stretching from Maamletin to the hamlet of Adma, east of the coast, was on fire. A cloud of smoke hung over the region as hundreds of civilians escaped the area.

The police spokesman said at least 12 explosions were reported in the depot spaced over 40 minutes.

The Lebanese Forces command said in a statement that the explosions were caused by "an act of sabotage that targeted a truck which was carrying ammunition from a depot in line with an agreement with the government."

"A bomb exploded in a truck, which led to detonating the ammunition loaded on the vehicle and to a chain of explosions in ammunition set for loading. This resulted in a number of casualties," the statement said.

The area was a traditional stronghold for the Lebanese Forces militia until government troops moved into the Kesroun province and other areas May 1 to dismantle the militia cantons that fought each other for over 16 years of civil war.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Qadhafi says Britain can go to hell

LONDON (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, who last month made overtures to Britain in a bid to restore diplomatic links, said Monday night that Britain can go to hell, Libyan television reported. "To hell with Britain and relations with it until the day of judgement. To hell with America and Britain," Col. Qadhafi said in a speech at a session of the Libyan General People's Congress. Britain cut diplomatic links with Libya in 1984 after a policewoman was killed and 11 people injured when unknown people inside the Libyan embassy in London opened fire on Libyan exiles holding an anti-Qadhafi demonstration outside. The Libyan government extended feelers to Britain last month through British legislator Edward Taylor, who met with Col. Qadhafi during a 10-day visit. Mr. Taylor said he had brought back several secret proposals, plus a letter of regret and a check for \$250,000 (\$405,000) for the killing of the policewoman. In a further move, Libya's ambassador to the United Nations, Ali Treiki, said June 10 that Libya would reveal information about its contacts with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) if Britain agreed to restore diplomatic ties. He said Libya's links with the IRA have been cut. The British government has said it wants convincing evidence the links have been cut, and has said that explosives and arms supplied by Libya to the IRA are still killing British citizens in Northern Ireland. Col. Qadhafi told the congress that Britain "began to criticise us, saying Qadhafi must personally apologise, Libya is a terrorist state, he is a dictator, and we do not need these relations. It is Britain who must come. It is Britain who needs relations with Libya. It should come and kneel before Libya so that we can perhaps open the file and say we may reconsider the matter."

Aoun stays on in Beirut refuge

PARIS (R) — France's ambassador to Lebanon left Beirut Monday, handing the problem of resident embassy refugee Michel Aoun to his successor. Mr. Michel Aoun, the former rebel Christian Maronite leader whose troops surrendered to Lebanese and Syrian forces last year, sought asylum in the embassy last October hoping to get to France. France has said it is willing to take him in as an exile but the Lebanese government insists he be banded over for trial. The Foreign Ministry in Paris said Ambassador Rene Ala, who has been in Beirut for two years, would be French envoy to the Vatican. He will be replaced in Lebanon on July 1 by career diplomat Daniel Husson.

Falashas in Israel unhappy

TEL AVIV (R) — About 150 Ethiopian newcomers to Israel burst into tears when officials forced them to move from a mobile home community to special immigrant housing, Israel Radio reported Monday. The radio said that the black Jews, among 14,000 so-called Falashas airlifted from war-torn Ethiopia in a military operation had lived in the mobile homes in Lower Galilee since their arrival in May. It said they were given four hours notice from the Jewish Agency, in charge of housing, to transfer absorption centres elsewhere in Israel. For several hours the Ethiopians refused to board buses sent to fetch them, saying they were happy where they were. Agency officials said absorption centres — apartment blocks where Hebrew lessons and other services are provided — were more suitable for the newcomers.

Israeli coalition survives

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's, right-wing government survived a parliamentary no confidence vote Monday over criticism of the kibbutz collective farm movement by the ultra religious immigration minister. The government secured 59 votes while the more dovish Labour Party and its leftist opposition allies, two presented eight no confidence motions, mustered 49. Minister Yitzhak Peretz, a controversial rabbi, said last week that kibbutzes drove immigrants to crime and should not house newcomers because they did not strictly observe Jewish religious customs. The remarks outraged secular Israelis. Kibbutzes were at the forefront of early pioneering in the Jewish state. Members drained swamps, worked land and built roads. Rabbi Peretz, responsible for the integration of some 14,000 black Jews from Ethiopia airlifted to Israel last month, has vehemently opposed a decision by the independent Jewish Agency to house them temporarily on kibbutzes.

U.S. combat planes leave Bahrain

BAHRAIN (R) — The last four U.S. combat aircraft sent to Bahrain during the Gulf war left Tuesday for Saudi Arabia, a U.S. embassy spokesman said. He said the F-6 Wild Weasel fighter-bombers were redeployed to Dhahran after a farewell flight over the island Wes. An embassy statement said Washington had 211 combat aircraft and 15,000 military personnel in Bahrain at the height of the U.S.-led military buildup that ended in the Gulf war. Only a few hundred U.S. servicemen, mainly navy personnel, are stationed in Bahrain but many others from neighbouring states visit the island for rest and recreation. The U.S. planes flew a total of 9,906 missions from Bahrain during the war.

Kuwait restores full communications

NICOSIA (R) — Kuwait announced Tuesday that full communications with the outside world had resumed after 10 months of isolation caused by the Iraqi invasion last August. The Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported. It said direct telephone lines, as well as telex, telegraph and other services had been restored. Telephone lines were partially restored last month but the direct dialling system did not resume until 10 a.m. (0700 GMT) on Tuesday, KUNA said. Iraq cut all communication lines with Kuwait on Aug. 3, one day after its forces occupied the emirate. The agency said the country code remained the same 965.

Algerian curfew lifted for 3 days

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's army announced on Tuesday that the curfew imposed after bloody fundamentalist unrest would be lifted in the capital and three other places for next Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In a statement carried by the Algerian News Agency APS it said the curfew, from 11 p.m. to 3:30 a.m., would rest on Monday June 24 and warned residents to obey roadblocks. Saturday and Sunday are the Eid Al Adha feast days and have been declared a public holiday. The curfew was imposed by the military enforcing a state of siege decreed by President Chadli Benjedid on June 5 after clashes between police and fundamentalists demanding an Islamic state.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Children's programme
18:30 Documentary
19:00 News in French
19:15 French varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Don't wait up
21:10 Our House
22:00 News in English
22:30 Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less

PRAYER TIMES

03:55 Fajr
05:27 Sunrise (Sunrise/Dhuhr)
12:33 Dhuhr
16:13 Asr
19:38 Maghrib
20:10 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swaidah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.

632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzianita Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Assiout Church Tel. 625383.
Tel. 628543.
Assiout Catholic Church Tel. 711331.
Assiout Orthodox Church Tel. 772561.
St. Epiphanius Church Tel. 771751.
Assiout International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654952.
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691.

WEATHER

Amman 20 / 35
Aqaba 26 / 41
Deserts 19 / 39
Jordan Valley 24 / 40

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalid M. Adli 743500
Dr. Saeed Tawfiq 788285
Dr. Abdul Qader Lala 690406
Dr. Khalil Al Jabali 740740
Firas Pharmacy 661912
Al Asma pharmacy 637025
Nasrallah pharmacy 636702
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 630321
Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ziad Al A'raj ()
Al Shamsa pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:

Dr. Rabah Al Borini ()
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896990
Public Security Department 630321
Hosel Complaints 630300
Price Complaints 661178
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 897467

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815515
Electric Power 636361
Company 845845
Ru Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Aila Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al-Rih Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Majma, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 6641714
Shmeisani Hospital 660131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musheer Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Abdali 66612157
Al-Rih, Abdali 6641646
Irbid, Al-Mashayef 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Aila Hospital 60224050
Anat Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09/983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Ibn Al Nafeca Hospital (02)271100
AQABA:
Princess Hayn Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)5330-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

18:00 Damascus (RJ)
18:30 Jeddah (RJ)
18:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

18:40 Laraca (RJ)

11:00 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:00 Cairo (RJ)
18:25 Istanbul (RJ)
19:00 Rome, Madrid (RJ)
19:10 London, Brussels (RJ)
19:10 Paris, Geneva (RJ)
19:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:00 Sanaa (YV)
12:20 Cairo (MS)
15:00 Benghazi (LN)
22:00 Paris (AF)

Home News

RJ to fly to Colombo

AMMAN (Petra) — The national airline Royal Jordanian (RJ) plans to open a route to Colombo, in Sri Lanka, in the coming month in the course of its well-planned expansion scheme to boost the airline's operations and services to all countries, according to an announcement Tuesday by RJ Director General Husam Abu Ghazaleh.

The national airline sustained \$100 million losses as a result of the Gulf crisis which broke out last August, but through new programmes and activities it is bound to make up for the loss, said Mr. Abu Ghazaleh in a statement.

"In fact, the past two months of operations proved that RJ had regained its momentum speedily, a good indicator for improvements ahead," the RJ chief noted.

"Plans for new routes are carefully worked out after feasibility studies, and RJ is sure of its capability to grow and contribute most beneficially to the national economy," Mr. Abu Ghazaleh said in reply to a question about current expansion plans.

"It is true that the RJ sustained losses during the Gulf crisis, but so did other airlines, for the same reason, he said.

"The resumption of RJ flights to Beirut, Monday, manifested the airline's determination to go ahead with plans to restore full momentum and open new routes, according to studied plans," Mr. Abu Ghazaleh added.

Replying to a question about the idea of transforming RJ into a public share-holding company, Mr. Ghazaleh said that was a mere idea in the course of an overall revision of policies.

"RJ contacted a number of international firms in order to help study this prospect, but the whole matter was postponed indefinitely following the eruption of the Gulf crisis last August; once the government is convinced of the idea, the RJ management can take a proper decision in this regard," Mr. Abu Ghazaleh pointed out.

Towards the end of last month, an RJ statement denied as groundless reports that the airline was holding contacts to reach a deal with Air France or other foreign airlines with the purpose

of enlisting their participation in RJ's capital once it has been transformed into a public share-holding company. The statement said that RJ had prepared a feasibility study on this project, in 1988 with the help of some firms, but no further steps were decided upon.

Mr. Abu Ghazaleh denied that RJ was contemplating the idea of returning a number of leased aircraft due to the current economic recession. "Such allegations and rumours are mere speculations and not true," he said.

"RJ is keen on constant modernisation of its fleet of aircraft and leasing aircraft is one of the options open to the airline, like all other airlines, depending on expansion and modernisation plans," he noted.

He said RJ was now at the threshold of a new phase of its activities and operations, and would utilise all its potentials, and use all its planes, to move ahead and remain among the most active airlines in the region.

Referring to financial difficulties facing RJ, he said that like all airlines operating in the Arab region, RJ faced difficulties due to the soaring cost of fuel and rise in the insurance charges, especially during the Gulf crisis, coupled with a decline in the tourism industry and transit operations in the region.

Despite the difficulties, Mr. Abu Ghazaleh continued, RJ's tourism and air transport operations are gaining momentum.

In reply to a question about this year's decision to increase the prices of air tickets, Mr. Abu Ghazaleh pointed out that the decision was taken by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and applied in April and May of this year by all airlines.

He said that RJ did not plan to introduce any further increases in ticket prices in the coming stage unless forced by circumstances beyond its control.

RJ Monday resumed flights to Beirut following a suspension of six years due to the general situation in Lebanon. The airline said that it would be operating three weekly flights between Amman and the Lebanese capital.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday meets with outstanding graduates

Prince Hassan urges excelling students to serve the nation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan met at Al Hussein Youth City Tuesday with a group of graduates, from the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University, who excelled in their performance and received the highest grades among this year's graduates.

The Prince congratulated them for their achievements, urging them to pursue their efforts for higher learning and increased efforts to serve their nation.

Addressing the graduates, the Prince reviewed the university education system in Jordan and various challenges and problems facing the graduates in their quest to get employment or pursue their post-graduate studies here and abroad.

The Crown Prince called on the graduates to form a special group whose members could take charge of following up on the future plans of the graduates regarding employment or higher studies.

He said that he personally was willing to take part in that group's activities, and urged this year and last year's graduates to form such a group.

"Studies conducted by this group would help the country understand the real problems of the present and the future, and help the universities to plan better for their courses," the Prince noted.

He urged the graduates to do collective work, to shoulder the responsibility given them and to take matters more seriously in dealing with issues of concern to the local community.

Prince Hassan noted in particular that foreign countries and international organisations could only offer Jordan financial assistance in the light of successful projects and seriousness in implementing income-generating schemes.

The Prince cited Jordan's cooperation with Germany and Japan and said that Japan had offered Jordan \$300 million to help it promote its educational system. He expressed hope that further aid would be forthcoming to promote the country's health and social development programmes.

Prince Hassan urged universities and concerned authorities to give due attention to vocational training for under-graduate students provided such training is linked to the local community's needs.

The Prince referred to the experiments of Germany and Japan in the post-war era in this respect, and called on concerned authorities to follow in their footsteps towards achieving the reconstruction of the country.

Speaking at the meeting were the presidents of the two universities who voiced their appreciation for Prince Hassan's directives.

King Hussein honours National Charter panel

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday honoured the chairman and members of the Royal Commission who drafted the National Charter, endorsed by the general congress on June 9, and, in a message to the chairman, Ahmad Obeidat, the King voiced his deep appreciation of commission's effort.

According to a Royal Court statement King Hussein conferred on Mr. Obeidat the Jordanian Al Nahda Medal of the Supreme Order, and other medals on the commission members.

In his message to Mr. Obeidat, King Hussein said that he was conferring the medal in recognition of this achievement and as an expression of the nation's gratitude for the great endeavours the commission had taken and the efforts it exerted to draft the charter.



Ahmad Obeidat

"The medals given to the commission members were a manifestation of the country's realisation of the great achievement they accomplished for the nation," the King said in his message.

The National Charter, drafted by the 60-member

commission, the King noted, "emerged in the form we had wished," serving the people of Jordan without any discrimination and constituting an umbrella for their dialogue designed to attain further achievements and to safeguard the national interests," King Hussein noted.

This charter, the King added, has been blessed by all members of the Jordanian family and by all political groups and schools of thought because it was designed to serve the whole nation.

King Hussein said that he was looking forward to further achievements by his people and noted that the medals were an expression of confidence in Mr. Obeidat, whom the King described on one of his closest advisors, and in the other members of the commission who participated in the creation of the National Charter.



PRINCESS BASMA VISITS ORPHANAGE

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) Tuesday stressed the importance of cooperation between public and private sector institutions in advancing the social development march and improving the levels of services offered to the needy families. Princess Basma was speaking at a meeting with the Administrative Committee of the Hussein Welfare Society, attended by Social Development Minister Yousef Al Atham. The minister called for

exerting every possible effort to enhance cooperation among the social services institutions in Jordan, and noted that the ministry had drawn up plans to improve the levels of services provided by such institutions and to upgrade their programmes. The Princess later toured the society's child care centre, Princess Basma Orphanage, Princess Alia Orphanage, and other facilities. Al Hussein Society was established by the Ministry of Social Development in 1971. It now cares for 150 children aged 0-12 years.

Show to benefit SOS children

AMMAN (J.T.) — On the occasion of the SOS International Day, celebrating the birthday of the founder of the SOS Children's Villages Hermann Gmeiner, the SOS Children's Village Association of Jordan will be present Amalia Abu Saleh and Theeb Abu Saleh in a comedy show specially directed for children and youth.

The two-hour show will also include the magician Mahmood

Hashoum, well known for his magical tricks that he got acquainted with in India and practiced in different parts of the world.

The group will be performing one show only in Amman at the Palace of Culture on Thursday, June 20, and all proceeds will go to the benefit of the SOS Children's Village Amman that takes care of orphaned and abandoned Jordanian children in family-like atmosphere.

Gulf Peace Team members denied entry in West Bank

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two persons of a Gulf Peace Team which took part in a walk from Jerusalem to Jordan earlier this month in support for peace between Israel and Arab countries have been denied return to the occupied Arab territories for their participation in that walk.

A Gulf Peace Team official in Amman told the Jordan Times that the two, Jim Douglass, from Birmingham, Alabama, and John Reuwer, from Virginia, in the United States, were denied entry when they tried to make the trip back to Jerusalem on Monday.

The decision to ban the two U.S. citizens from returning to Jerusalem was taken by the Israeli Interior Ministry and a border guard ordered the two Americans back into Jordan, according to the team official.

"All I did was walk for peace, I have committed no crime," said Mr. Douglass in reply to the order.

Mr. Douglass was one of the 23 peace activists detained in the West Bank by Israeli troops and charged with failure to comply with military orders.

The peace walkers believe that under international law the occupation force has no grounds for arresting or charging people in the occupied territories.

Mr. Reuwer supported the

walk for peace, but was not among those who were arrested. The other members of the team who reached Amman planned to go to Iraq for a walk between Baghdad and Karbala, as their final stretch of the Middle East walk dedicated for the establishment of justice and peace in the region.

The group, whose members were still in Amman Tuesday trying to travel to Baghdad, plan to visit Al Amiryah shelter, which was raided by allied bombers during the Gulf war, and visit the road linking Karbala to Baghdad as well as the death route followed by Iraqi troops on their way to Iraq after evacuating Kuwait where they were bombed.

The trip to Iraq was termed by the group as a reconciliation mission to express sympathy and solidarity with the Iraqi people and to support calls for lifting an embargo on Iraq, the team official noted.

The group's 120-kilometre march from Jerusalem to the Jordan Valley commemorated the six-day Arab-Israeli war of 1967. The group members said that they had learnt firsthand about what Israeli occupation means for the Palestinians who are denied the freedom of movement, detained and have their basic human rights violated.

To graze or not to; controversy over goats comes to a head

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The controversy that surrounded a decision taken a few months ago by Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Alawneh, to open forest areas for goats to graze on came to a head this week when a top Jordanian environmental official challenged the minister's decision and showed journalists the kind of damage freely grazing goats have caused the environment recently.

In March of this year Mr. Alawneh allowed, for the first time, goats and sheep to graze in forests that are 15 years old or more. "The goats could eat from trees, that could rejuvenate themselves and by so doing we are allowing the sheep and goats to prune trees for us," Mr. Alawneh had said.

"In addition, the droppings of the sheep and goats benefit the forest and the animals take care of eliminating the dry weeds which have caused many forest fires in Jordan," the minister had said in support of his views.

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) had raised an outcry over the ministry's decision to allow the goats into the forests and society President Anis Muasher said that the goats were bound to destroy most of the forest if they were allowed to graze in them.

"We are trying to conserve nature and protect the trees and animals from extinction at a time when we realise that the forests cover only one per cent of Jordan's area," said the society president in an earlier statement to defend his views.

Mr. Muasher challenged the minister's decision, calling the goats "black locusts" and saying that they are capable of destroying forests that the society was "desperately trying to protect."

Journalists Sunday were taken on a tour of forests grown and cared for by the RSCN in order to show them the damage that goats had done to those forests. Of the three forests toured, one, the Lizab forest, was damaged to near elimination. According to Mr. Muasher, there were 10,000 trees planted on the 200-dunum six year old forest. Only 20 of these trees remain today.

"Shepherds have broke through the protective wire surrounding the Lizab forest and this is the result," Dr. Muasher said.

On the few trees scattered around, the traces of damage were apparent. The goats, which eat anything, had eaten the bark of the trees and bitten

into their pulp. "This damage to the bark means that food will not be able to go to the top branches of the tree and it will soon die," Dr. Muasher said.

A great deal of the funding for forests in Jordan comes from the German government. Charge d'affaires at the German Embassy Matthias Meyer said that a German government delegation, currently visiting Amman, have discussed the matter with the Minister of Agriculture. "The German side expressed concern over the possible damage to forests funded by the German government. In the minutes signed at the end of the discussions, it was agreed that a solution has to be found for the matter if damage is done to the forests," Mr. Meyer said. "We do not know yet if and how much damage has been done, but we have an expert who will be making studies on this matter."

Mr. Meyer said that funding the forestry sector in Jordan, by the German government, would continue as "we would like to do more for Jordan."

Mr. Muasher said that a great deal of controversy surrounded the subject of damage goats cause. "I think it is time that we bring in some experts in the field of forestry, either from Jordan or abroad, to resolve this debate," Dr. Muasher said.

According to studies by professors of forestry it has been proved that goats are "a forest's worst enemies as they graze on trees up to two metres of the trees' heights. Goats also eat saplings, new growths and gnaw the barks of trees. They also graze on particular areas over and over until they no longer have the ability to rejuvenate themselves. Often, goats expose the roots of trees to direct sunlight, cuts, peeling, pressure and death," the professors wrote.

An informed source at the Ministry of Agriculture said that advertising affected the resulting controversy. "When it was advertised to shepherds that they will be permitted to take their flocks into forests they did not realise there were limitations and thought that all forests were accessible to their goats. The result was that goats were allowed into young forests and the effect was disastrous," he said.

The official, who preferred anonymity, said that it was obvious after this year's experiment, allowing goats to graze in forests, was far more damaging than expected.

"This was the first year that goats and sheep were allowed to graze. Because the grazing was not controlled in any way, the results were dramatic.

Damage has been done by the grazing and certain areas will have to be replanted," he said.

He added that the major problem now was controlling the phenomenon. "We have a problem on our hand now because it is extremely difficult to tell shepherds their flocks are no longer permitted to graze in places for which they have permits from the Minister of Agriculture," he said.

Another informed source, speaking on condition of not being identified, said that the underlying perception among shepherds was that trees that do not bear fruits are useless and can be sacrificed for food to their flocks. "This attitude is ridiculous because the leaves of trees and the shade they provide are in a sense a fruit. But many shepherds help the grazing goats and bring down out-of-reach branches or break them so that their flocks can feed on them," he said.

In previous news reports Mr. Alawneh said that the purpose of opening forest areas for goats was so that they could prune the trees. "The sheep and goats could eat from trees that would rejuvenate themselves and by so doing allowing sheep to prune the trees for us," Mr. Alawneh said.

The minister also said that because grazing was allowed in forests, forest-fires were reduced by about 80 per cent because goats eliminate the dry leaves.

An official at the Ministry of Agriculture said, however, that these numbers must have been taken from other sources as the Ministry of Agriculture does not make forest-fire statistics until the end of the fire season, which is at the end of October. "Leaves are most dry in July and that is what starts fires. This is why July marks the beginning to the season and October the end. Since this is the first year goats have been allowed to graze in forests, and since we have not yet made our statistics about forest-fires and how grazing has affected their rates, I can tell you positively that the 80 per cent that was quoted did not come from studies by the Ministry of Agriculture," he said.

A RSCN member who preferred not to be named, said that this year was the worst year to start allowing goats to graze in forest. "Not only did we get less rain than usual this year, and trees did not get their fair share of water to grow well, but the goats were also allowed to graze in March when trees are not supposed to be cut or 'pruned' because trees rejuvenated and grow at that time of the year.

He said that unfortunately, goats fed on the new growth on trees causing great damage.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Showqi Shoukni, Mohammad Al Jalous and Rifqi Al Razzaz at Abdal Hameed Shoman Foundation (10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
- ★ Palestinian heritage exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Photo exhibition by Hans Richter at the Goethe Institute.
- ★ Poster exhibition at the British Council.

FILM

- ★ An introduction to the abstract films of the twenties at the Goethe Institute (films shown include commercials from the twenties and Hans Richter's "Everyday").

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Luck is not only asset

BEHIND HIS Majesty King Hussein's decision to accept the resignation of Prime Minister Mudar Badran and his choice of Foreign Minister Taher Masri to form a new cabinet lies a realisation that this country is entering a new political era and that our people should be prepared to deal with it determinedly and effectively.

Mr. Badran's government was not without shortcomings, but it has served its useful purpose at a most crucial stage in the history of Jordan and the whole region. Three of Mr. Badran's major accomplishments have been his ability to manage the affairs of the country well during the Gulf conflict and war that followed the superb management by his team of the country's economy and liberalisation of the political process in the Kingdom. Mr. Badran's enthusiastic support for Iraq was shared by most Jordanians and we do not feel the outgoing prime minister can be singled out for criticism for his role during the crisis.

Mr. Masri thus inherits an important and a rich legacy, even though his mission will not be easy. He has three main issues to tackle: The peace process, the economy and Jordan's flourishing democracy. Each of these can be a big problem if not handled properly and urgently, especially since all three are interdependent as well. On the peace process Mr. Masri, as did most Jordanian prime ministers before him, will have to uphold Jordan's commitment to a just and durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict while at the same time manoeuvring to ensure enough Arab support and unity and seeking American pressure on Israel to meet the Palestinians and Arabs halfway. He needs to make clear to the Syrians, the PLO and the Jordanian people that Jordan is not and will not be going it alone into the peace conference without Palestinian and Arab support and consensus. This of course is very much dependent on Arab reconciliation. Otherwise pressure on Jordan would be enormous. Mr. Masri's long experience as foreign minister and his good relations with Arab leaders will certainly play a positive role in the search for Arab reconciliation.

Jordan's economic well-being will depend to a great degree on both peace among the Arabs and peace with Israel. While the road to peace with Israel is long and tortuous, closing of Arab ranks may prove to be a less thorny problem. The economy of this country has always depended on Arab aid and on the transfer of expatriates' earnings. However, the lesson from the Gulf crisis and war should be absorbed and learned. Jordan needs to devise alternatives to its pre-Gulf war finances, and has to negotiate with the IMF and creditor countries skilfully if results are to be positive.

Democracy, which landed Mr. Masri in Parliament and led to his appointment as prime minister, will surely be a headache for him. But if the Muslim Brotherhood, as has been reported, does not agree to join Mr. Masri's government, then he will have to contend with a strong opposition in the Lower House. With a number of important draft laws to be approved by the House, the new government will have not only to pacify the Brotherhood but also to outwit their programme and rhetoric which seem to appeal to a big sector of our society.

We can only wish the prime minister-designate the best of luck in his endeavour. But the man's intelligence, credibility and integrity will remain his biggest assets.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDANIAN dailies continued their discussion of the trials going on in Kuwait of Palestinians and Jordanians accused of collaborating with the Iraqi occupation army and the torture and inhuman treatment the non-Kuwaiti nationals are accorded by the legal and illegal authorities in the emirate. Al Ra'i for its part said that these courts are issuing illegal rulings against the very people who exhausted their lives to build up Kuwait over the past four decades at a time when the world is turning a blind eye over the atrocities committed and the injustices practiced against the innocent civilians. The Palestinians and Jordanians who had lived under the Kuwaiti rule before August of 1990, continued to lead the same life under the occupation, serving in their own field: and they can by no means be held responsible for the occupation nor for the eviction of Kuwaitis from their homeland, said the paper. The Palestinians and the Jordanians committed no sin but are clearly guilty of remaining in Kuwait when its rulers fled the country along with those now in power, the paper stressed. It said that the Jordanians and Palestinians left in Kuwait had to pursue their services as usual not to benefit the Iraqi occupation forces but rather to safeguard the interests of the civilian population. For this reason, it said, the Jordanian government has now initiated wide-scale campaigns appealing to Amnesty International, the ICRC and other organisations as well as governments of various nations including the major world powers to put an end to the repression and injustice. The paper said that the Jordanian government's move was tantamount to an invitation to all peace-loving groups and international humanitarian organisations to intervene and stop the killings and torture of the innocent civilian Palestinians and Jordanians in Kuwait.

A writer in Al Ra'i daily calls attention to the low level standard of services offered by Amman Municipality to the capital's residents, and notes that as the population grows the problems tend to increase. Iyad Waqfi notes that Amman has been reputed as one of the cleanest capitals of the world, especially after the municipality had introduced measures to ensure periodic cleanliness campaigns and after eliminating the tremendous numbers of rodents and rats that infested various districts before the 1970s. The writer says many complaints are being raised at present at the low level cleanliness and also the re-appearance of a great number of rats. He says the municipality is on record in its announcement three years ago that it has completely disposed of the sources of the rats, and sure enough Ammanis enjoyed a clean city devoid of the rodents that not only devoured grain but also constituted a source of danger and diseases.

Economic Forum

Do we have an economic policy?

THE ANSWER to the above question is in the negative, unless having no policy is a policy. However, I am not aware that our economic thinking does reach such a level of sophistication. If it is a deliberate and conscious choice, a no-policy policy will be tantamount to one poised for greater and greater liberalisation of the economy. Otherwise we will not be knowing where to go and what is better to do. I am fearful that this is the case.

By economic policy I mean an interrelated set of measures, attitudes and positions which serve an identifiable economic strategy. This is not there. What we have is a variety of ad hoc measures tailored to cope with problems that emerge or develop, not by design as much as by accident, in the course of running our economy.

In previous columns, we told our readers that economic strategies revolve, in the final analysis, around one of three cardinal goals: economic growth, price stability and combating unemployment. During the last one or two years, the managers of our economy seemed to be over preoccupied solely with eliminating the budget deficit. Such an issue cannot be the main goal of economic policy, as it has

been in our case. The natural result was that such over-preoccupation has distorted the economic policy of Jordan and will, if it goes unabated, distort the Jordanian economy itself.

The adjustment programme contracted with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) may be taken to embody an implicit economic policy. However, after the achievement of exchange rate stability, the programme, or what is left of it, is basically made up of rectifying Jordan's international payments imbalance. (Hence the emphasis on eliminating the budget deficit).

If external debt is discarded, Jordan will be able to balance its books regarding its foreign exchange receipts and outlays. Any excess demand over supply here can be trimmed through some sort of import regulation.

Thus the ultimate goal of the adjustment programme is effectively to enable Jordan repay its external debt. This process will take years and years. In the programme, no mechanism is spelled out as to how the Jordanian economy will manage to cater for its own needs and additionally generate the financial surplus needed to amortise external

debt. One can hardly label a situation where the overriding goal is repaying external debt as making up viable economic policy. Indeed, it is sad to mortgage the economy for such a goal and for such a long period. This is neither in the interest of the debtor or the creditor. The adjustment programme was designed in such a way as to impose fiscal discipline, and if necessary, to force it. But the same set of measures recommended in it for this very purpose can very well distort the investment climate in the longer run.

One of the major tasks the new government is to formulate an integrated and visible economic policy which will have to be based on sweeping economic liberalisation.

Apart from stabilising the Jordanian dinar which will probably have to be wholly credited to Dr. Mohammad Said Nabulsi, the Central Bank governor, the main achievement of the past two governments was raising taxes. However, this is a negative achievement. There is of course every chance for the past economic policy trends to continue with the new government into the future. If that happens, it will be very tragic because the private sector will have reached the stage and state of despair.

Postwar U.S. ascendancy side tracks Europe's aspirations

By Joseph Fitchett

PARIS — Whether they like it or not, leaders in Europe and the Middle East agree that the U.S.-led victory in the Gulf war capped a string of changes — in Europe, the Middle East and Africa — that have given Washington an extraordinarily strong global hand.

In the process, the sense of U.S. power has shifted from one of a soft-edged internationalism that buoyed the Gulf crusade, with Washington as first among equals. The emerging perception is that history and the Bush administration are working for what some might call a Pax Americana.

"The United States, capitalising on its recent military victory, is transforming its advantage into political victory on every continent," said Jean-Michel Boucheron, head of the defence commission in the French Parliament.

Largely unmentioned in official discourse, however, is that Washington's new authority has irritated some governments, including those of the Soviet Union, Germany and France, because they see that the future they had anticipated is being postponed, perhaps indefinitely.

Instead of seeing U.S. power ebb with the cold war's end, foreign leaders are baying to position themselves and shape policies that respond to a surprising twist in international relations: U.S. ascendancy.

The initial response on the part of many European governments is simply to try to wait it out.

In Asia, the pattern of reactions is simpler. For Japan and other Pacific tigers, the United States is only a military superpower, an indispensable partner in security but a competitor that in the economic sphere is actually lagging.

All these foreign reactions often ignore the domestic context — in the White House, Congress and the country — that sets ambitions and likely limits of U.S. power.

Internationally, the Gulf war has re-aligned geopolitical expectations about the rest of the decade, officials say, because the magnitude of the U.S. military performance contrasted so strongly with the impression of

Soviet subordination and Japanese paralysis.

Germany, labouring under the strains of absorbing its new eastern third, was totally absent from the Western security debate on a crisis that has reset the security agenda.

If Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the architect of Germany's geopolitical strategy, had anticipated that the moment was at hand when Washington would no longer be a serious influence in Europe, "he will have to set back his calendar a few years," said an official of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

In contrast, countries as different as Poland and Britain are more than ever insistent on consolidating U.S. power in Europe in NATO as the only force offering what a Polish cabinet minister describes as "psychological containment" of a united Germany strong enough to reassure other countries on the continent.

Nowhere is this new vortex of power being tested faster than in Europe. To delineate the change, consider these indications:

• In the Soviet Union, the Bush administration is being embraced by President Mikhail

Gorbachev and the radical opposition alike because both see U.S. power helping determine the country's future.

• Europeans publicly pay homage to the Bush administration's performance and call for a continued U.S. role in Europe. To do otherwise would look ungrateful or, far worse, silly. But privately many Europeans echo the views of a German official who says that Washington's capacity for leadership "will subside as economic and social difficulties mount."

• In the Middle East, perhaps the most critical region, there is what an Arab official unhesitatingly calls "a rare unanimity in which every government is a U.S. client or bargaining to become one." The Gulf war has jolted the Arab World and even Iran and other Muslim forces towards the view, already accepted by Egypt and Israel, that Washington holds the keys to change in the Middle East.

A sign of new U.S. self-confidence is the Bush administration's readiness to decide which international choices it will try to manage and which it will delegate.

Washington has encouraged both Moscow and Paris to participate in the search for peace in the Middle East, a radical change from the previous U.S. hostility to any other "outside" involvement.

France, for example, is a Western interlocutor with Iran and the Palestine Liberation Organisation because Washington shies from official contacts with them.

This U.S. approach, an Arab diplomat said, reflects a pragmatic confidence that all parties in the Middle East "realise that only the United States can deliver." When Washington is not interested, nothing happens, he said, citing U.S. indifference to Syria's recent move to gain hegemony in Lebanon.

The Bush administration's current sense of mastery over the Western agenda was displayed in March when Mr. Genscher met in Washington with Secretary of State James A. Baker. The outcome, scarcely reported at the time but widely noticed in governmental circles, extracted German acknowledgement of NATO's continuing central role in Europe's political future in

exchange for U.S. recognition of the legitimacy of an undefined "European security identity."

This trade-off, a Bush administration official says, showed that "the Germans acquiesced in what had to happen, and we gave promises which the European still have to decide how to collect on."

The debate among European governments about possible military roles for the European Community or for the Western European Union, a grouping of seven European members of NATO, appears increasingly inconclusive, diplomats say. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which once seemed poised to dilute the U.S. voice in Europe, seems to be withering away.

That Washington statement set the stage for NATO's decision early this month to create a rapid-intervention force and keep its integrated military command under a U.S. officer, an outcome that was more remarkable for what it preserved of NATO than for what it changed, alliance officials say.

German agreement reflected not only U.S. pressure but also

Bonn's disappointment with France and Italy, which seem to be drifting out of the main transatlantic political discussions despite a flurry of EC proposals last year, German diplomats said.

Britain, in contrast, has moved, with Dutch support, to capitalise on the new U.S. impetus. On the crest of U.S.-British cooperation in the Gulf, London quickly championed the idea of a NATO rapid-reaction force. Britain got the primary share of the new assignment, including command, thus staving off troop cuts that would have demolished the British military presence on the Continent.

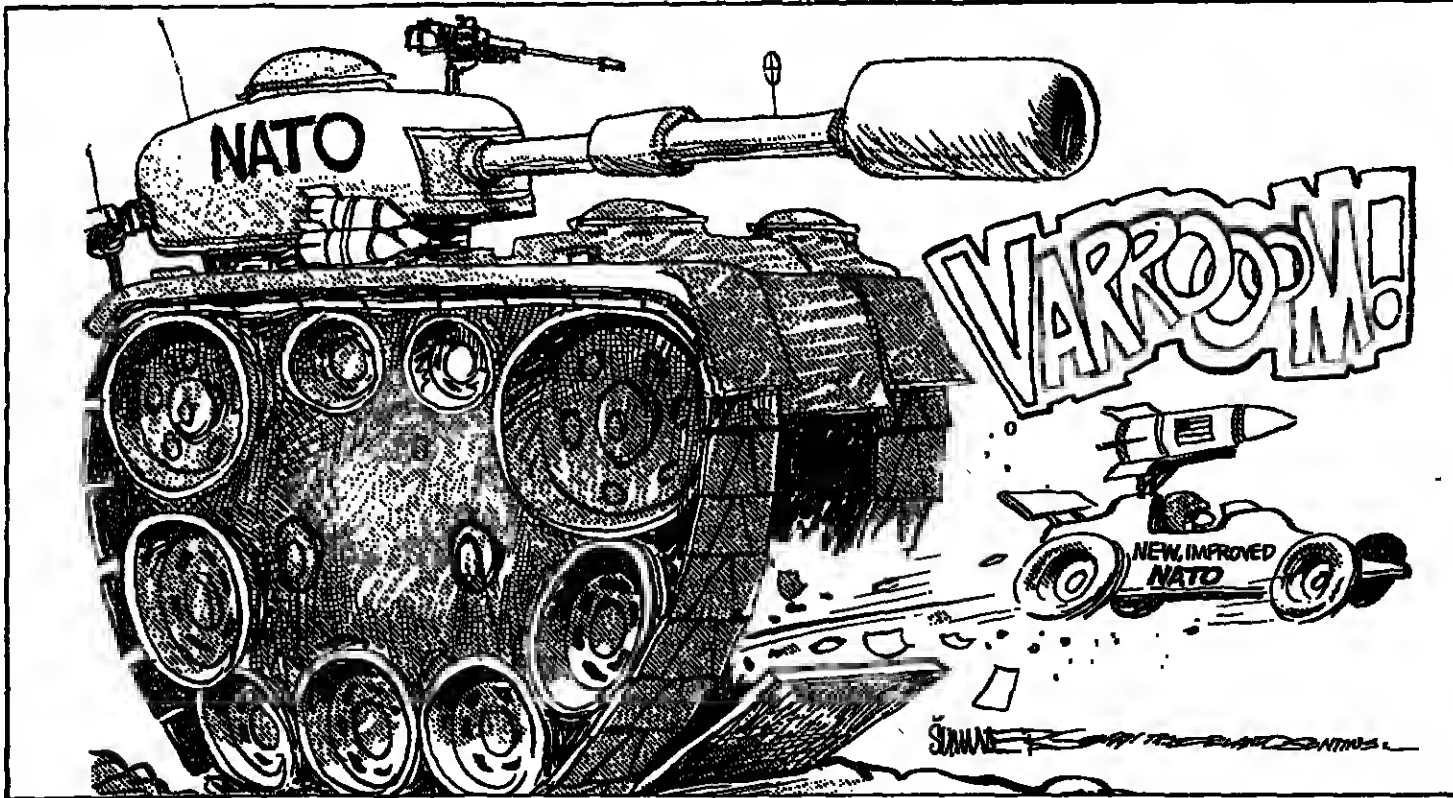
Interestingly, Spain — normally aligned with France in keeping its distance from NATO — praised the NATO decision as a "step in the right direction." While ruling out putting Spanish troops under NATO command, Madrid suggested coordination with NATO on areas of "mutual strategic concern."

France, in contrast, seized on the NATO decision — even though French forces are not involved — to back away from international military cooperation of any kind, even in the EC. French officials, admitting that they are puzzled by the pullback, attribute it to President Francois Mitterrand's feeling that it will appeal to nationalistic feelings at what appears to be a pre-electoral campaign.

Mr. Mitterrand seems to have veered away from post-Gulf readiness to exploit France's role in order to attack the Gaullist legacy of suspicion of Washington. Michel Rocard, prime minister at the time, told a Socialist Party congress that "between the tyranny of Coca-Cola and the democracy of Afghanistan, I have made my choice."

The severest re-evaluation, of course, occurred in Moscow. Despite official military bravado that Iraq had provided an easy opponent, NATO officials have no doubt that Soviet commanders were stunned by the real-life display of conventional force that Moscow has less and less hope of matching.

Despite U.S. efforts to dispel Soviet concerns, the facts of U.S. power are inescapable, diplomats say. — International Herald Tribune.



Just like Vietnam, Americans are angered by Gulf war

By James T. Philipps

A RECENT TIME/CNN poll reported that 89 per cent of the American people are proud of what the United States has accomplished during the Gulf war. The approval rating for George Bush has consistently registered a similar percentage since the president pushed the button on Jan. 17, 1991. The anticipated surge of support for American troops at the outset of hostilities has been sustained for over five months. What were the accomplishments that America now celebrates with military parades? What were the victories that encouraged this festive atmosphere of preening pride?

Are most Americans proud of a democratically elected president who assumed dictatorial powers of decision-making equal to those of his authoritarian enemy? A few

Americans will always remember the unilateral actions of George Bush as he bribed and bullied other nations into supporting his "this will not stand" stance. They will remember the manipulations of the press and public into believing that this pre-planned assault upon Iraq was only a series of thought fully considered responses to the acts of evil perpetrated by Saddam Hussein. But, what will be remembered most by those who opposed the Gulf war, will be the public statements by President Bush prior to the congressional vote approving his actions.

Mr. Bush declared his right to go to war regardless of the outcome of the vote in Congress by the elected representatives of the American people. Are Americans really proud of supporting actions that ignored the constitution

and caused the abuse of power and authority in ways similar to the oft-mentioned Adolf Hitler?

The victorious accomplishments of "the finest troops any country has ever had" continue to be celebrated and savored by a majority of Americans. Are they proud of the fact that the greatest superpower on earth successfully produced a vast arsenal of weapons that quickly reduced an ineptly led and inferior Third World fighting force into a defenceless foe?

Do the parades signify approval of a military battle plan that included the relentless destruction of the civilian infrastructure of Iraq that continued on for weeks, unopposed by Iraq's defeated and devastated army and air force? The body-count of Iraqi soldiers killed during Desert Storm has been estimated to be

between 100,000 and 150,000.

The civilian (women, children and non-combatants) death toll could even be higher, increasing daily due to disease and hunger created in the aftermath of the American bombing campaign.

When President Bush called off his dogs of war and declared victory, Americans cheered and applauded their leaders, their troops and themselves. The defeat suffered in Vietnam has been buried beneath the rubble of Iraq. The United States finally got the chance to bomb an enemy "back to the stone age." And, once again, the nation wants to bring the troops home as soon as possible. This time as victors. Five hundred thousand new heroes are returning to boisterous welcomes from adoring and admiring fellow citizens. Mission accomplished.

The after-effects of the war against Iraq reverberate through the Middle East. While Americans celebrate the brilliance of war machines and the bravery of warriors, millions of people have had their lives disrupted, damaged and destroyed. Nine out of ten Americans tell the pollsters that they are proud of a military venture that has split the Arab World into feuding factions more threatening to peace than the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait; allowed Syria to complete its domination of Lebanon; encouraged Israel to attack Palestinian camps, while building more Jewish settlements in the occupied territories; increased the build-up of conventional weapons in Israel, Syria and Saudi Arabia; opened the door for continued United States military involvement in the region; and brought unnecessary suffering to Jordan, a nation that prayed

for negotiations and peace.

In America, people are marching through the streets of their cities, towns and villages puffed up with pride, bloated on hot air like the balloons in a new year's day parade. When the orgy of self-congratulation ends and the truth about this Middle East misadventure begins to filter through the blue smoke and mirrors created by the covert foreign policy of George Bush, the opinion polls might possibly show a change in the attitude of the American people. The minority who opposed this war will be joined by many others whose pride in accomplishment will be replaced by anger and shame. Just like Vietnam.

The writer, a former director of an art gallery in the U.S., is currently writing on Middle East issues for various American publications.

مركزنا من الأصل

Features

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Masri in intense contacts

(Continued from Page 1)

him a marginal majority in a vote of confidence count in November when the regular session of Parliament is reopened.

Analysts maintain that the Brotherhood has also used the pretext of the differing views on the Palestinian issue to withdraw from the government after they calculated their gains and losses during their six months in Mr. Badran's government.

When they entered Mr. Badran's government they knew that the government also abided by Jordan's general policy on international legitimacy regarding the Palestinian problem; what made them to it then?" one analyst asked.

Mr. Masri met with the Muslim Brotherhood representatives in the morning but no details were immediately available of the details of the meeting. A report by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Tuesday referred to a meeting between Mr. Masri and Dr. Abdul Latif Arabiyeh, speaker of the Lower House of Parliament and member of the Muslim Brotherhood, but the agency was vague on the aims and content of the meeting.

Sources had told the Jordan Times Monday that the movement was expected to demand from Mr. Masri a pledge against negotiations with Israel in addition to their 14-point list of conditions which they wanted Mr.

Badran to abide one-and-a-half years ago. The list of demands ranges from applying Sharia law to banning the sale and manufacture of liquor to the country.

The premier-designate also met with the five-member Liberal parliamentary bloc, which, according to a source within the bloc, expressed interest in participating in Mr. Masri's government "but only if our conditions were met." The source, however, did not reveal what these conditions were.

He said that his bloc did not have fundamental objections to Mr. Masri's appointment as prime minister but maintained that the final decision of his group "largely depends on the people he appoints as ministers, whatever they are deputies or from outside the Parliament."

The seven-member Democratic bloc also met with Mr. Masri but although they expressed their willingness to support his government, sources said they wanted their participation to be considered as that of their umbrella coalition, the Jordanian Arab National Democratic Alliance (JANDA).

The sources added that in their meeting with the premier-designate the bloc members requested two ministerial posts but did not receive an answer from Mr. Masri in response to their request.

JANDA is a coalition of leftist and independent personalities and representatives of political parties in the country.

Mr. Masri also met with the members of his own National Parliamentary Bloc which includes 15 members. Details of that meeting were not immediately available but sources said Monday that the National Bloc was expected to extend its support to Mr. Masri. It is also expected that the final cabinet list would include prominent members of the National Bloc.

According to highly-informed sources, certain ministerial positions have already been allocated although the list was not final. The sources predicted that the new prime minister will also assume the portfolios of defence and foreign affairs.

Candidates mentioned by the sources for different portfolios: Jawad Shout (the governor of Amman) for interior; Khaled Karaki (minister of culture and youth) for information; Ali Abu Ragheb (former president of the Ministry of Industry and Trade; Hisham Khatib (former minister of energy; Rael Nijm (former minister of public works) for Awqaf and Islamic affairs; Abdul Karim Dughni to stay at labour; Jamal Sarayrah to stay at transport; Abdullah Nasour and Salim Zoubi (both deputies) are also nominated for posts in the new government.

8 more face death

(Continued from Page 1)

Habash, appealed to international organisations and humanitarian groups to move quickly to stop "the arrest campaigns launched against Palestinians in Kuwait, and the death sentences."

Twenty other alleged collaborators went on trial in Kuwait Tuesday before two martial courts, each composed of three judges and two military officers. Eight were found not guilty and the cases of 12 were adjourned.

Zaid Mohammad Amin, a 17-year-old Jordanian student, was among several accused of membership of a pro-Iraqi group during the seven-month occupation. Amin, who said police beat him to force a confession, had his case adjourned.

"You confessed that you were a member of the Palestine Liberation Front (a pro-Iraqi group) and that you were trained to use weapons. Is that true?" Judge Jawad Jassem Al Abdullah asked Amin.

"No sir, this is not true. It did not happen... the police forced me to say what they wanted me to say... they were hitting me hard with iron bars and chains. I had to say that, sir, believe me I had to say that," Amin replied.

He said he was detained at a Kuwait City hospital after taking the body of an aged neighbour who died of a heart attack to the morgue.

Hamed Mousa, an 18-year-old Palestinian student, was also accused of joining the same organisation, Mousa, whose case was also adjourned, protested his innocence and said he had been forced to make false statements.

There is no appeal under martial law, but the martial law governor Crown Prince Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah must approve all sentences in consultation with three judges from the court of appeals.

Tuesday's death sentences brought to 21 the total death sentences issued since the collaboration trials began May 19. Such sentences are carried out by hanging.

The earlier sentences included three Jordanians, two Palestinians, two Lebanese, a Kuwaiti woman, two stateless Arabs and three whose nationality was not known, according to the AP.

Iranians stage peaceful demonstration in Mecca

NICOSIA (Agencies) — More than 100,000 Iranian and other Muslim pilgrims denounced "arch-Satan" America in a massive rally Tuesday at the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Tehran Radio reported.

The broadcast aired a taped recording of the demonstrators shouting "Allahu Akbar," in Arabic, and said the thick crowd extended three kilometres from the compound where it was staged.

The rally was the first since 1987, when a similar "disavowal of infidels" rally turned into a bloody riot and more than 400 people, mostly Iranians, were killed in clashes with Saudi security forces.

The radio reported no unexpected incidents at the rally, seen as a key test of Iran's new attitude of compromise after years of confrontation with the Gulf Arab states.

But it said final agreement on the site was reached at a meeting between the Iranian and Saudi foreign ministers on Tuesday morning, only hours before the rally started.

At a meeting on Monday night Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, "we very much hope that this year the haj ritual will be carried out in a complete, correct and fully peaceful manner."

Tehran Radio said the demonstrators carried portraits of the late supreme Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"Shouts of 'Allahu Akbar' (God is Greatest), 'Death to America' and 'Death to Israel' are once again echoing in Mecca, engulfing its heavenly atmosphere," it said.

The radio said that 117,000

pilgrims were among the 1.6 million Muslims from around the world, who have gathered in Mecca and Medina for this year's Haj.

Iran's former Intelligence Minister Hammad Reyskhahri led the demonstration before dusk prayers, the radio said.

Mr. Reyskhahri, a hard-liner, is Ayatollah Khomeini's personal envoy to this year's Haj.

Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency said that the ceremony was observed by Foreign Minister Velayati, who is performing the pilgrimage with his Iranian compatriots, and King Fahd.

Iran and Saudi Arabia, the region's most powerful nations after Iraq's Gulf war defeat and also the world's biggest oil exporters, resumed diplomatic relations in March after a three-year rift in the aftermath of the 1987 Mecca riots.

Even before 1987 relations were cool between Iran's Shiite Muslim leadership and the conservative, Western-backed Sunni kingdom that supported Iraq in its eight-year war with Iran.

President Rafsanjani and other leaders, saying Iran could not ignore the biggest Muslim ritual which is obligatory for all able Muslims at least once in their life, rejected objections by some hard-liners that sending pilgrims to Haj while U.S. Gulf war troops were still on Saudi soil hurt Iran's revolutionary image.

Despite its new flexibility, Tehran is making clear it has not forgotten the people who died in what it calls the "bloody Friday" or "bloody Haj."

Mr. Reyskhahri presided over a memorial meeting for the 1987 Haj victims in Mecca Monday and a similar meeting is scheduled at a Tehran mosque on Wednesday.

'Useful exercise' in democracy

(Continued from Page 1)

of the change in government is to bridge the gap between the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) and the Jordanian government, especially that there is talk of forming a joint delegation to attend a peace conference.

Abu Kifah said he believed that Mr. Masri's Palestinian origin will be a "main link" between the Jordanian

policymakers and the Palestinians.

"The change is not only in government but it is a change in policy," Dr. Nasir said. "Faher Masri represents a moderate wing inclined to get into the peace process," he added.

Less optimists thought that this change would not bring about tangible results in the peace process.

"I don't think we will ever see peace brought to this part of the world," Mr. Abdul Kader said. He

explained that he feels this way because of "past failures," and that the appointment of the new government did not effect his judgement.

A 36-year-old housewife, Mariam Fakhouri, who shared Mr. Kader's sentiments, said that Jordan would not be able to do anything independently because "they (the United States) will dictate the conditions of any peace process."

U.S. official sees fight with Congress

(Continued from Page 1)

points. Mr. Dine said Israeli supporters who were unhappy about settlements should "swallow hard, roll up your sleeves and get to work to fight linkage."

He said that without the loan guarantees Israel would have to take commercial loans for periods of not longer than seven years, too short a time to build housing for immigrants.

With U.S. guarantees, it could take 30-year loans.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said Tuesday that Israel does not need U.S. approval to build Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. Levy was speaking to reporters at Ben-Gurion airport after returning from a week-long visit to the United States, where he met with the Secretary of State Baker.

"There is no commitment on the part of Israel or any responsible party in Israel which says we require American approval for settlements or building in the (occupied) territories," Mr. Levy said.

Mr. Levy also contended that the peace process has bogged down not because of settlements but because of Syria.

"What is holding it up is Syrian reply to Baker's proposals," Mr. Levy said. "We are still waiting for the Syrian reply, and I am still hoping it will be positive. But it is clear that the delay is holding up the peace process."

Kelly testimony

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly told Congress Monday:

"In our contacts in the region, we have found a significant

amount of agreement among the parties on the key elements of the approach we advocate.

"We found general acceptance of the idea of a conference, cosponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, which would lead directly to bilateral negotiations between Israel and its Arab and Palestinian neighbours and to multilateral negotiations on regional issues. The conference would not have the authority to impose its views on the parties and would not interfere with negotiations.

"We also found a general acceptance of a two-track approach: Israel and the Arab states would conduct negotiations on one track, and Israel and Palestinians from the Occupied Territories would conduct negotiations on a parallel track. We found agreement among the parties that negotiations on the Occupied Territories would proceed in phases, with negotiations on permanent status following talks on interim self government. We found agreement that Palestinian representatives should come from persons living in the Occupied Territories who accept the two-track, phased approach and who are committed to living in peace with Israel. We found agreement that this process would be rooted in UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338.

"There still remain a number of issues on which agreement has not yet been reached, primarily related to the U.N. role and the

ability of the conference to reconvene. The administration believes the United Nations should have a role at the conference. A role for the U.N. should pose no problem, since this is a conference that cannot impose its preferences and cannot be a court of appeal.

Blackmail

(Continued from Page 1)

destruction. Under the resolution, U.N. member states are encouraged to contribute cash, equipment and expertise to the weapons-destruction programme, but Baghdad is required to pay the cost of the task.

It gives Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar 30 days to recommend a method for Iraq's payment. The only practical options are to use Iraq's financial assets still frozen in foreign accounts, or to deduct it from its oil revenues.

Iraq's representative, Samir Al Nima, told the council his government would continue to cooperate and offered to provide experts to help destroy the chemical weapons under the supervision of the special commission. He said the offer was made to reduce the cost of the process.

He did not specify what method Iraq was contemplating using to neutralise the chemical

weapons.

Mr. Nima, however, said his government rejected the concept of being required to dispose of all the weapons.

In April, Baghdad gave the Security Council a catalogue of its chemical weapons and Scud-type ballistic missiles, with a range of over 150 kilometres.

The Iraqi government said at the time that it had no biological weapons programme or plans to develop nuclear weapons. Those claims have been disputed by the U.S. State Department.

U.N. officials working with the special commission were not satisfied with Iraq's catalogue of its weapons of mass destruction. All such weapons were ordered destroyed under Resolution 687, the April 3 vote that authorised a permanent ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Diplomats said they did not know the precise size of Iraq's chemical arsenal.

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Financial Markets

Currency	New York Close (17.6.1991)	Tokyo Close (18.6.1991)
Sterling Pound	1.6260	1.6190
Deutsche Mark	1.7941	1.8066
Swiss Franc	1.5425	1.5543
French Franc	6.0925	6.1555
Japanese Yen	140.67	141.00
European Currency Unit	1.1245	1.1344

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.00	6.06	6.31	6.81
Sterling Pound	11.37	11.16	10.87	10.75
Deutsche Mark	8.75	8.87	9.03	9.06
Swiss Franc	7.87	7.93	7.81	7.64
French Franc	9.87	9.57	9.31	9.75
Japanese Yen	7.93	7.71	7.65	7.56
European Currency Unit	9.45	9.37	9.90	9.81

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	368.25	6.95	Silver	4.42	1.10

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.686	.688
Sterling Pound	1.1107	1.1163
Deutsche Mark	.3797	.3816
Swiss Franc	.4417	.4439
French Franc	.1119	.1125
Japanese Yen	.4867	.4891
Dutch Guilder	.3371	.3384
Swedish Krona	.1051	.1056
Italian Lira	.0510	.0513
Belgian Franc	.01851	.01860

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7900	1.8200
Lebanese Lira	.0745	.0765
Saudi Riyal	.1820	.1830
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	.1850	.1860
Egyptian Pound	.1950	.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7500	1.7700
UAE Dirham	.1850	.1860
Greek Drachma	.3400	.3600
Cypriot Pound	1.3810	1.4110

Index	16/6/91 Close	17/6/1991 Close
All-Share	112.54	111.90
Banking Sector	108.57	107.24
Insurance Sector	114.31	115.10
Industry Sector	116.14	116.56
Services Sector	130.34	129.07

Paper uncovers 490 millionaires in China

BEIJING (R) — A provincial newspaper has reported that 490 entrepreneurs have amassed more than a million yuan (\$100,000) each in communist China — a sum it would take the average Chinese urban worker more than 800 years to earn.

The State Administration for Commerce and Industry checked 90,000 private entrepreneurs created since the early 1980s when China introduced economic reforms, according to an issue of the Hainan Special Zone News received in Beijing Tuesday.

The paper said official audits and secret checks uncovered 490 individual entrepreneurs worth more than one million yuan.

China's leaders have publicly declared that "to get rich is glorious," but evidence of such startling disparities in income may be hard for a few Marxist hardliners to swallow.

An administration official in Beijing declined to confirm the newspaper's report.

"We don't tell that sort of information to outsiders," he said.

Swedish airline forms joint venture with Lot

STOCKHOLM (R) — Swedish airline Linjeflyg A.B., 50 per cent owned by haulage firm Disposition A.B., said Monday it had signed an agreement with Polish airline Lot to start a regional European airline run as a joint venture.

"The new airline will serve destinations within Poland as well as the international routes in the vicinity of Poland," Linjeflyg said in a press release.

It said the new airline would be named Linjet, and the airline would fly 70 passenger Fokker F28 aircraft in Linjeflyg's present fleet.

Linjeflyg is Sweden's largest domestic airline.

The release provided no financial details.

Linjet will be registered in Poland and Warsaw will serve as the hub of its traffic network, the release said. The head office and maintenance facilities also will be in Warsaw.

Linjeflyg said it would form a management team to establish the new company, and personnel would be recruited from Lot's present staff. Linjeflyg will train pilots, cabin staff, technicians and ground staff.

Japan and U.S. work to help India stave off credit crunch

WASHINGTON (R) — Japan and the United States are trying to help cash-strapped India cope with enough money to avoid defaulting on its \$70 billion in foreign debt, diplomats and analysts have said.

The extra assistance, which could include a \$220 million emergency loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and an additional \$100 million from Japan, is designed to help India cope with a short-term credit squeeze until a new government can enact economic reforms later this year.

"This is an old fashioned balance of payments crisis," said James Clad, a senior associate at the Washington-based think-tank Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "India is really broke."

Diplomats said the IMF has discussed with India's caretaker government a \$220 million compensatory financing loan to help the country cope with the economic impact of the Gulf crisis, particularly last year's sharp oil price rise.

"We're looking at it," said a U.S. official, who declined to be identified.

But the government has shown

scant sign of acceding to IMF demands for price increases, interest rate hikes and other measures in return for the loan.

Diplomats though said that such demands are negotiable once the new government takes over.

They added that some rich nations oppose bailing out India from its current crisis, arguing that struggling is the only way the nation will learn the necessity of economic reforms.

So far, Japan has been the only wealthy country to come up with financial help to India so it can meet an estimated \$1 billion cash shortfall in the April-September period, diplomats said.

It has pledged \$150 million in co-financing with the Asian Development Bank, which is putting in \$150 million of its own, and is ready to pump in another \$100 million, they said.

Some diplomats were hopeful, however, that some European nations may soon join Japan with money of their own.

India's credit crunch, the product of years of ballooning budget deficits and mounting foreign debt, has been brought to a head by the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi last month.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Iran plans to become net exporter of petrochemicals by the year 1993

ISFAHAN, Iran (R) — Iran plans to produce nine million tonnes of petrochemicals by 1993, joining the league of net exporters.

Mr. Ahmad Rahgozar, president of the National Petrochemical Company (NPC), told Reuters that Iran was still importing \$2 billion worth of petrochemicals a year, mainly from Europe and Japan.

Iran's 1980-88 war with Iraq destroyed much of the country's petrochemical plants, some of which were still being reconstructed.

"By the year 1993, 80 per cent of our production will be for domestic consumption and the rest will be exported," he said.

"We have signed all the contracts for the five-year plan," he said.

About \$3.27 billion worth of petrochemical complexes are to be built with foreign help in Arak in central Iran, Bandar Imam Khomeini on the Gulf and Tabriz in the northwest under the five-year plan to March 1994, he said.

Mr. Rahgozar named the companies involved as Italy's Techintom and Denora, the French Spiechim and Technip, Germany's Krupp Koppers and Daehim of South Korea.

Last year he had said that the new projects would help boost Iran's annual petrochemical output from three million tonnes to five million by 1995.

Mr. Rahgozar said that Iranian companies, which were constructing the Bandar Imam Khomeini complex when the Iran-Iraq war broke out, would not take part in the new projects. He declined to give further details.

The unfinished 50-50 joint venture was ended in February last year when the Japanese side, a consortium led by Mitsui and Co., paid Iran 180 billion yen (\$900 million).

Mr. Rahgozar said more than \$3.5 billion had been secured from the government and the private sector after Iran recently moved to privatise part of the petrochemical industry.

Central bank governor, Mr. Mohammad Hossein Adeli, told Reuters earlier that Iran had raised nearly 70 per cent of \$17.5 billion in foreign credits from European and Japanese banks to help finance its \$120 billion five-year plan.

Mr. Rahgozar estimated that Iran's share of total Middle East petrochemical production, would double to 20 per cent by the year 2000.

But he said although the region owns more than 70 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves, its share of petrochemical production was still around three per cent of the world's total of 423 million tonnes per year.

He estimated that Middle East production of main petrochemical products — ammonia, ethylene, olefins, methanol, plastics, rubbers and synthetic fibres — would reach 31.7 million tonnes in the year 2000.

"There are obviously constraints and obstacles in the development of petrochemical industry, the most important of which is technology transfer (and) high volume of investment," Mr. Rahgozar said.

Iran and other regional countries needed technological help from the industrialised states, he concluded.

Yemen to get more loans from Japan, World Bank

SANAA (R) — Yemen, whose economy was hard hit by the Gulf crisis, is to get more loans from the World Bank and Japan, a source in the planning and development ministry said Monday.

He said the World Bank would lend \$12.6 million to help finance a fisheries development project and the Japanese Fund for Overseas Economic Cooperation would provide a \$50 million loan to expand the telephone network.

Official sources in Sanaa said last week that Japan was writing off \$900 million yen (\$6.5 million) in loans to Yemen for the first half of 1991.

The World Bank announced last week that it would lend Yemen \$33 million to help it cope with its economic crisis.

The fisheries development project, also financed by the government, the European Community and the Agricultural Development Fund, will cost about \$38 million.

Saudi Arabia and other oil rich states, incensed by Sanaa's sympathy for Baghdad, sent home more than one million Yemeni expatriate workers and slashed aid.

Survey finds Hong Kong's shopping strip world's most expensive

LONDON (R) — Hong Kong shopping space is the most expensive in the world, with storekeepers paying rents that top Tokyo's Ginza and New York's Fifth Avenue, according to a survey published Monday.

London-based international real estate consultant Healey Banker found rents in the colony's central shopping district, at \$690 per square foot, were the world's highest.

Businesses have often paid premiums for scarce space in Hong Kong, a centre for Asian tourism and business.

It became the world's costliest as Japan's falling yen and soft real estate market knocked Tokyo's \$680 per square foot Ginza district into second place. Ginza had been ranked most expensive since Healey Banker began its twice-yearly main streets across the world report in 1988.

The group said rents around the globe have generally cooled off this year as a worldwide economic slowdown blunted consumers' appetites for luxury goods.

Prime Manhattan retailing space on Fifth Avenue or 57th Street goes for \$400 to \$450 per square foot, a bit below its peak. Singapore, in fourth place, fetches nearly \$400 per square foot for its retail space.

European store rents have been rising, boosted by economies that are still expanding modestly. But the \$200 to \$250 per square foot rents for prime space are still far below Asian and North American levels.

Kaufinger Strasse in Munich boasts Europe's costliest store rents, at \$242 per square foot. Paris's avenue Montaigne is \$226 per square foot and London's Oxford Street \$220.

Czech Republic plans to privatise over 1,000 state firms worth \$12b

PRAGUE (R) — The Czech Republic intends to privatise 1,321 large state-owned industrial firms worth around \$12 billion (Czech crowns \$12 billion), Czech regional minister of industry, Mr. Jan Vrba, said Monday.

A first group of firms are to be presented for privatisation projects by May 31, 1992, the state news agency CTK quoted Mr. Vrba as saying.

Privatisation of most enterprises of public interest, such as railways, will not begin for five years.

Within a month, the entire list of firms to be privatised will be made public. Another list will be made of those that will remain the property of the state for the next five years.

"Over 150 firms in the Czech Republic have already started negotiating deals with foreign partners. Our aim is to get here \$1.5 billion in foreign capital," Mr. Vrba said.

Kuwait Airways orders 15 Airbus

PARIS (R) — Kuwait Airways said Monday it has ordered 15 Airbus aircraft and would also order three Boeing-747 400 planes.

Airbus Industrie Managing Director Jean Pierson told a news conference Monday the Kuwaiti airline had ordered the 15 Airbus planes and taken options on nine more.

Aithus said in a statement that Kuwait Airways placed firm orders for three A-320s, three A-310, 300s, five A-300-600Rs and four A-340 200 aircraft.

The airline has also acquired options on two A-321s, three A-300 600Rs and four A-340 200s.

Mr. Ahmad Al Mishari, chairman of Kuwait Airways, confirmed the Airbus orders and said his company would also order the three Boeings.

"What we are doing today is just the new start of Kuwait Airways and of rebuilding our country," he told a news conference.

"We lost about two thirds of our fleet during the Iraqi invasion and lost most of our maintenance facilities and engine workshops," Mr. Mishari added.

Industry officials estimated that the total value of the Kuwait Airways order from Airbus Industrie, including the nine options, was about \$1.9 billion.

Airbus Industrie said in a statement that Kuwait Airways would begin receiving the A-320s and A-310-300s in 1992, and start taking delivery of the A-300 600Rs in 1993.

The airline said deliveries of the A-340-200s are scheduled to begin in 1997, although the airline has the flexibility to switch to other members of the A-340-340 family before that.

Cyprus pledges to stamp out video, music piracy

NICOSIA (R) — The government of Cyprus, where you can buy a cheap copy of virtually any Hollywood blockbuster, has announced new legislation intended to take the island off an American blacklist for video and music piracy.

Commerce and Industry Minister Takis Nimitas told journalists the new measures will increase penalties and enable police to take more effective action, including the immediate confiscation of illegal cassettes.

About 90 per cent of video and tapes available on the Mediterranean island are illegal copies, Companies Registrar Maria Kyriakou said.

Kevin Costner's Oscar-winning Dances with Wolves and the New Cher film Mermen are among the latest arrivals in shops throughout Cyprus, snapped up by holidaymakers for less than the price of a London cinema ticket.

"We are determined to put an end to the theft of intellectual property which gives our country a bad name," Mr. Nimitas said.

The U.S. film industry estimates it is losing \$100 million a year from video piracy in Cyprus. Films are copied onto cassettes and illegally exported to eager customers in Europe and the Gulf.

In April, Washington placed Cyprus on an intellectual property watch list for films, audio and music recordings and computer software.

Three American specialists visited the island last month for talks on copyright law, treaties and enforcement.

"The U.S. concern is shown by the formal placing of Cyprus as one of the 29 countries on the watch list of April 25," Mr. Michael Meigs, the U.S. commercial attaché told Reuters.

"Everything stems from the illegal importation of master copies and their duplication professionally by a few pirates, who probably number less than 10," he said.

Mr. Meigs said the United States wants priority given to stopping the sale of pirate cassettes to tourists.

Mr. Kyriakou, whose office is in charge of preparing the new legislation, said existing law protect copyright but penalties are light — a \$4 fine for each illegal cassette and up to two months in jail for a second offence.

Illegal copies can be confiscated only after a court order, a procedure she said was slow and ineffective.

Last October the government passed a bill prohibiting the recording of 80 films for a year after their official release. Its implementation is patchy.

One firm even had the gall to apply for official permission to build a factory to copy and export cassettes, Mr. Nimitas said.

Mr. Nimitas said the new measures still had to be approved by the house of representatives but he hoped they would be in force by the end of the year.

As soon as they become law, the government will order the confiscation of all illegal video and music cassettes on the island, he said.

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WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — Tokyo stocks finished a lacklustre day down, continuing their consolidation after sudden gains late last week. Brokers said a lack of fresh factors and the impending release of Japanese money supply data kept most investors sidelined. The Nikkei average was down 257.62 points to 24,805.47, with 260 million shares traded.

SYDNEY — Shares fell off early highs to close marginally lower on scattered trading. The All Ordinaries closed at 1523.1, down 0.2.

HONG KONG — Closed for Holiday

SINGAPORE — Prices fell over a broad and quiet front in a day of featureless trading. The Straits Times Index lost 10.81 to end at 1,523.37.

BOMBAY — Prices rallied for the second day as hopes rose of a relatively stable, congress led government emerging from an inconclusive general election. The Bombay Stock Exchange Index ended at the day's high, up 20 points to 1,335.21.

FRANKFURT — Shares closed lower in quiet trading, following the lead set by Wall Street and Tokyo. "It was a non-event day, said one trader. The Dax Index fell 5.65 to end at 1,695.42.

ZURICH — Shares closed little changed in quiet trading but off earlier lows. The SPI Index rose 0.2 to 1,118.5.

LONDON — Shares closed slightly lower. Prices were dragged down by a \$489.4 million rights issue at Sainsbury and a disappointing performance from the newly privatised Scottish electricity companies. The FTSE 100 Index closed down eight at 2,516.

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De Klerk calls for multi-party conference to prepare transition

JOHANNESBURG (R) — President F.W. de Klerk has called for a multi-party conference to prepare for the drafting of a new South African constitution after the last pillar of statutory apartheid was scrapped.

"The best way to ensure rapid progress... is to take the next important step along the road of negotiation," de Klerk said after white legislators repealed the 1950 population registration act by 108 votes to 38 Monday.

"That means multi-party talks at a multi-party conference," de Klerk said the conference — expected to discuss mechanisms, ground rules and framework for writing a non-racial constitution could be held before the end of the year.

"Do we realise how close we are to the final breakthrough? All who desire peace should begin performing in respect of the negotiating process," he said.

But the government and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), the country's biggest black movement, could be heading for a showdown at the proposed conference.

The ANC and its allies have said they will not compromise on the talks on their demands for a constituent assembly and an interim government. The government, for its part, has said it will not give up its authority.

"A constituent assembly

elected by a simple majority — which is what the ANC advocates — is definitely unacceptable," de Klerk's chief negotiator, Gerrie Viljoen, said last month.

Analysts say, however, that de Klerk is aware he may have to create some form of interim structure as his government would have an advantage over other parties if its took the parts of both empire and player in writing a new constitution.

De Klerk has said he favoured bringing selected black leaders into government in an advisory capacity. He has said the present extra parliamentary leadership who would attend the multi-party talks could set up a forum to thrash out a constitution.

The idea has been rejected by the ANC and its allies, who say no substantive negotiations on a new constitution should take place until each party has tested its support in a non-racial election to decide who takes part in the talks.

The ANC welcomed the scrapping of the population registration act but urged the government to end discrimination in pensions and schools.

It called on the government to explain to the people of South Africa and the international community whether it would continue to have different pensions for blacks and whites, and whether it would integrate all white govern-

ment schools.

"Clearly as long as such blatantly racist practices continue, the population registration act will have been removed in name only, while in reality little will have changed," the ANC said in a statement.

It urged the outside world to keep anti-apartheid economic sanctions until it was clear apartheid reform was irreversible.

The repeal of population registration, and of other pillars of apartheid such as the group areas act and the separate amenities act, meets key conditions set by the U.S. and Europe for lifting anti-apartheid trade and investment sanctions.

The repeal provides for the existing race register to remain in place until a new non-racial constitution comes into force.

The ANC said it was unacceptable that the population registration list would continue to exist and rejected government claims that the list was needed for by-elections.

It said the three chamber parliament for whites, Indians and coloureds should be replaced by an interim government.

Japan to review sanctions

In Tokyo, Japan's foreign ministry said Tuesday it welcomed the decision of South Africa's parliament to end race classi-

fication and that it was reviewing its policy towards Pretoria.

"The abolition of these laws is a historic event in the process of establishing non-racial democracy in South Africa," the ministry said in a statement.

Under the apartheid system, Japanese were treated as honorary whites in South Africa.

U.S. welcomes decision

On Monday, Washington hailed South Africa's repeal of the last legal pillar of apartheid as a historic step but said the white government had not met all the conditions for the lifting of U.S. sanctions.

"This is a historic moment for South Africa. With the repeal of the population registration act, an important pillar of apartheid has been eliminated," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher.

"By repealing the population registration act and earlier this month the group areas act... the South African government has met a fourth of the five requirements for the termination of sanctions under the comprehensive anti-apartheid act of 1986," he said.

The last remaining condition is the release of all political prisoners, which is a matter of dispute between the South African government and the ANC.

Baker says West must act to stabilise Eastern Europe

BERLIN (R) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker urged the West Tuesday to reach out to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union before ethnic tensions threaten stability.

In a policy speech on the eve of a major East-West foreign ministers' conference in Berlin, Baker also outlined some of the incentives the United States is considering to encourage more radical economic reform in the Soviet Union.

He listed a special Soviet association with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), food distribution and energy projects, help in converting obsolete defence industries to civilian use, more open trade and technical cooperation and business education.

With the collapse of communism, ethnicity had re-emerged as a powerful force in Europe, threatening new divisions between countries and within multinational states such as Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, Baker said.

"These forces cast shadows

over the new democracies," he said. "We need to offer an inspiration, even a goal, to these peoples rediscovering new values upon which they can build pluralistic, democratic and free market societies."

A senior Baker aide, talking before the speech, spoke of a race against time to create structures integrating East and West to offset a tendency towards disintegration in Eastern Europe. Baker's speech was prepared for delivery to the U.S.-based Aspen Institute, a private foundation that brings together policy-makers and experts to discuss international issues.

He suggested the economic, security and political ties that now bind and enrich the United States, Canada and Western Europe could be extended to the Soviet Union, and to East European countries that have recently shed communism.

These ties include NATO, the European Community (EC) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), whose foreign ministers meet

Wednesday and Thursday. "We must begin to extend the trans-Atlantic community to central and Eastern Europe and to the Soviet Union," he said.

"Our objective is both a Europe whole and free and a Euro-Atlantic community that extends east from Vancouver to Vladivostok," Baker said.

The greatest challenge was the Soviet Union. Briefing reporters before the speech, he said: "It's going to be a lot more difficult to extend the community (to the Soviet Union) if the decision were taken there not to move toward political pluralism and economic reform."

One month before President Mikhail Gorbachev is due to discuss Soviet economic problems with leaders of seven major industrialised powers in London, Baker gave more shape to a package of assistance Washington may be willing to support.

He said as Soviet leaders "demonstrate the will to help themselves... then we can and should join them step-by-step."

Mount Pinatubo calms down Philippine refugees still stream towards city, repair work on

OLONGAPO, Philippines (R) — Philippine families worked frantically to save their homes from collapsing under the weight of ash pumped out by a volcano as refugees streamed into this city next to the sprawling U.S. Subic Bay Naval Base.

Men, women and children stood on roofs shovelling away huge mounds of ash that fell on Olongapo during a series of explosions at Mount Pinatubo in the northwestern Philippines at the weekend.

At least 207 people died in the eruption, 34 of them in Olongapo and two inside Subic, including a nine-year-old American girl. A hospital, bridges and the main bus terminal lie in ruins.

Mount Pinatubo has quietened down since the weekend's fierce explosions, prompting volcanologists to recommend cutting its danger zone from 40 kilometres to 20 kilometres.

But people from towns north of Olongapo are still pouring into the city, not so much out of fear of another eruption but because a bombardment of ash and sand

buried their homes and farms. Pedro Marang, a former overseas contract worker in Saudi Arabia, invested his earnings in farmland and a water pump. "All that is gone, buried under the sand," he said.

He and his family took refuge in one of the evacuation centres in Olongapo. The city's 300,000 inhabitants have had no power or water since Saturday. People walk aimlessly through devastated streets alongside the huge American base, dazed by the disaster.

About three quarters of the houses in Olongapo, 80 kilometres northwest of the capital, Manila, have buckled under the weight of knee deep ash.

"It is going to take six months to a year to recover from this disaster," said local congresswoman Kate Gordon.

"I don't think people should expect too much from the government because the scale is just so big," she said. "The private sector must work with the government to help us cope."

The United States said it would provide earth-moving equipment from Subic to help clear the roads.

The Philippine navy began shifting supplies up the coast and said it would deliver a million litres (265,000 gallons) of water to Zamboanga province north of Olongapo in a tanker Wednesday.

Almost a quarter of a million people have fled from the danger zone, taking refuge in 300 camps and evacuation centres set up in Manila and other parts of the northwest.

In and around Manila, social workers and relief volunteers worked round the clock to provide food for about 20,000 victims of Pinatubo's wrath.

Volunteer Fernanda Francisco said the workers cook around five 50-kilogramme bags of rice every meal to feed some 4,500 refugees at the Marikina sports complex on the northeastern edge of Manila.

"We never stop cooking," she said as she supervised another meal of rice and fish in huge pots and casseroles.

Yeltsin heads to Washington

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, newly empowered by an overwhelming election victory intends to try to calm Western fears of a disintegrating Soviet Union.

Yeltsin, who headed for Washington Tuesday, was elected last week on a platform of radical economic and political reform. He is expected to tell U.S. President George Bush that only more drastic change can bring long-term stability to the Soviet Union.

He is expected to receive a welcome worthy of a head of state, in sharp contrast with his last venture to the United States two years ago.

During that trip, Bush refused an official meeting with Yeltsin for fear of angering his rival, Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev. Instead, Bush only "dropped by" a meeting between Yeltsin and a White House official, and used the occasion to praise Gorbachev.

2nd stage of Irish talks unlikely before September

SYDNEY (R) — The second stage of peace talks on Northern Ireland may not be held until September, chairman of the talks Sir Ninian Stephen said Tuesday.

Stephen, a former Australian governor-general, said a timetable for the talks had still to be finalised but they would not occur during July or August.

"When I say nothing will happen in July and August I mean nothing after the first or second week in July," Stephen told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in a radio interview.

"Something may happen before then but nothing during that period," he said.

Stephen could not be contacted to elaborate. The first face to face meeting for 17 years between Northern Ireland's Catholic and Protestant leaders was held Monday in Belfast.

Fiery Protestant preacher politician Ian Paisley gave his final approval for Stephen's appointment after leaving the talks venue for an hour to check

on the diplomat-judge's background with his Unionist party officials.

Stephen said he accepted the daunting task of chairing the peace talks because it appeared that progress could be made in the world's longest running guerrilla conflict, in which almost 30,000 people have been killed and 30,000 hurt since 1969.

"I think it is an extraordinary opportunity that seems to be developing for some progress in what has been for so many years a situation which has shown no progress," Stephen said.

Stephen said he would not develop objectives for the second round of talks until he was fully briefed, and he declined to comment on whether the absence of the Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish republican army, condemned the talks to failure.

"I would not be for or against considering a suggestion for their inclusion but as I said it would require full agreement, and then some very careful consideration," he said.

India's Congress rallies round Rao for next prime minister

NEW DELHI (R) — India's Congress Party, bereft of assassinated leader Rajiv Gandhi, rallied behind veteran loyalist Narasimha Rao Tuesday in the search for a prime minister who could attract defections from rival parties to form the next government.

With about 25 per cent of the 511 parliamentary seats at stake yet to be declared from voting that ended Saturday, Congress appeared likely to be about 20 seats from a majority.

Rao said senior party leaders had started Monday evening to discuss how to select the prime minister who will form India's fourth government in less than two years.

His residence in the heart of New Delhi was besieged by reporters and photographers waiting to catch a glimpse of the party's parliamentary board, an inner core of seven leaders who were meeting in secret to avoid an open contest.

Rao, 69, told Reuters he preferred that the board, which has one seat left vacant by Gandhi's death May 21, reach a consensus on one candidate for prime minister.

Whoever emerges as victor will face a financial crisis and endemic violence spawned by secessionist, caste and religious conflicts.

India's latest elections, culmi-

nating in a massacre of Hindu train passengers by Sikh militants, were the most bloody since independence from Britain in 1947.

Two minority governments struggled over the past year to keep sufficient foreign exchange reserves to cover a month's imports and service \$4 billion of short-term loans.

India's foreign debt totals \$70 billion.

The new government needs to complete an interim austerity budget soon if it is to negotiate a \$2 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to stave off default.

Rao's rival is 50-year-old Sharad Pawar, who is backed by industrialists from the economically powerful western state of Maharashtra where he is chief minister. India's financial centre, Bombay, is capital of Maharashtra.

Pawar said he wanted a secret ballot among all members of parliament elected in the polls.

"We will fight it if they don't agree to a secret ballot. Who is the parliamentary board to decide on this? We will take it to the party," said one Congress leader backing Pawar.

The majority of Congress members appeared to be pledging support to Rao, a soft spoken

Brahmin scholar from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. He has held senior cabinet posts in the governments of both Gandhi and his mother Indira.

Rao is perceived in the party as a politician Gandhi liked and trusted, said a senior party source.

Pawar on the other hand is seen as a politician who tried to topple Gandhi from the party's leadership when he was ousted from power in the 1989 general elections, the source said.

Gandhi succeeded his mother when she was assassinated in October, 1984.

The source said Gandhi loyalists controlled the parliamentary board and would ensure Rao's selection by consensus before the elected members met later this week. Any opposition to the board's candidate would be bulldozed.

The source said the question of forming a government would be decided after selecting a party leader who would then take on the mantle of prime minister after the government was formed.

It appeared that Congress, which has ruled India for all but four years since 1947, would first try to attract defections from rival parties and, failing that, seek to form a coalition.

"But there is no question of

asking the communists to help form a coalition government," the senior party source said.

Congress was likely to seek defections from former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh's Janata Dal, composed mainly of politicians such as former Prime Minister V.P. Singh who quit Congress when Gandhi was prime minister.

More than a third of the party must defect at the same time for members to escape disqualification from parliament under anti defection laws.

The Janata Dal's most vulnerable spot is in Uttar Pradesh, where Congress has been routed by the Hindu chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in both the state and parliamentary polls.

Several Janata Dal candidates backed the BJP wave and won elections in the state, which has more seats than any other. They include influential leaders who disagreed with Singh over his controversial plan to raise to nearly half the number of government jobs set aside for low caste Hindus.

The defeat of several Congress leaders in Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring Bihar could tempt disgruntled Janata Dal politicians to defect.

"We believe they will," said the senior Congress source.

Japan softens stance on Soviet aid ahead of summit

TOKYO (R) — Japan's foreign ministry Tuesday said the return of Soviet held islands was no longer a condition for aid to Moscow — a move diplomats said was in preparation for joining a possible Western consensus at next month's economic summit in London.

Ministry spokesman Taizo Watanabe told a news conference that Tokyo considered the return of the islands important as a historical issue, as a matter of principle and a way of establishing trust and confidence between the two countries.

But asked if the return of the islands was a precondition for

Japan giving aid, Watanabe said: "It is not a condition. It is a very important issue that should be settled."

"We are ready to listen to what (Soviet President Mikhail) Gorbachev has to say. We have an open mind. Our fundamental position is to support perestroika through technical assistance and humanitarian aid. We are not inclined at this moment to give large scale financial aid," he said.

A European diplomat said Tokyo would in the end go along with a Western consensus on aid to Moscow, even if the islands were not returned first.

Vaccine gives AIBO sufferers glimmer of hope

FLORENCE, Italy (R) — A new vaccine developed by a French researcher has given victims of the AIDS virus a glimmer of hope.

But forecasts of the spread of the disease presented Monday at the seventh international AIDS conference made grim reading for the developing world.

Paris scientists Daniel Zagury said initial tests showed his vaccine restored part of the body's ability to fight off AIDS. However, his study involved only six HIV-infected patients, an extremely small sample.

Scientists worldwide are seeking a treatment to restore the body's immune system destroyed by the HIV virus that causes AIDS.

"This (vaccine) has many advantages. It restores, at least partially, specific immune reac-

tion," said Zagury, of the Pierre and Marie Curie University in Paris.

He stressed the results were only preliminary and more experiments were needed. He did not name the vaccine.

Researchers are increasingly convinced that any AIDS vaccine will prove more effective in slowing the disease's spread in the body after infection than in preventing infection.

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) destroys the body's immune system, leaving patients helpless in fighting a host of diseases from pneumonia to extremely rare cancers.

The one approved AIDS treatment is a drug called AZT, which is not a vaccine. It treats symptoms but does not eliminate the virus.

A senior World Health Orga-

nisation (WHO) official told the conference that young adults and children in the world's poorest countries will be among the hardest hit by AIDS in the 1990s.

"There can be no doubt that during the next several decades, AIDS in most developing countries will become the leading cause of death among adults in their most productive years," said James Chin, chief of WHO's AIDS surveillance unit.

AIDS would also be one of the leading causes of infant mortality. Outside the 16th century fortress where the conference is taking place, film star Elizabeth Taylor made an emotional outburst against a U.S. ban on foreigners infected with HIV.

"If you start stamping people's passports you hark back to Nazi Germany," Taylor told a news

conference at a luxury hotel.

She was presenting an American AIDS fund-raising initiative. Robert Gallo, the controversial U.S. researcher who has said he discovered the HIV virus, will address the five-day conference on AIDS related diseases.

Gallo and French scientist Luc Montagnier have been battling for years about who was the first to identify the virus.

Meanwhile another researcher reported success Monday in laboratory trials with a version of a controversial drug to treat AIDS.

Ira Berkower, a senior investigator with the U.S. centre for Diagnostics, told the international AIDS conference that the drug was unique in that it only needed to deactivate a small portion of each virus cell to be effective. The drug, made by Mic-

rogenesis INC of Connecticut, is a version of soluble CD4, a treatment that has failed to live up to expectations scientists held out for it two years ago.

Other researchers at the AIDS conference have voiced scepticism about this type of drug, which doctors found was largely unsuccessful when tested in humans.

Derkower said the microgenesis drug was designed to work by blocking up only a very small proportion of the spikes that protrude from the surface of the AIDS virus.

These spikes, called GP 120, attach themselves to the CD4 protein found on the surface of blood cells. CD4 is the main target of the HIV virus. The precursor of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), and acts as a gateway for the infection to enter the cell and kill it.

COLUMN

Thai sulks for 22 years

BANGKOK (R) — A young man denied a motorcycle by his parents locked himself in his room and has stayed there for 22 years, a mass circulation Thai-language newspaper has reported. The parents of Dan Jaimun, who was 42, tearfully asked Monday readers of the daily news to help up with ideas on how they could persuade their son to come from his small bedroom where he lives with a lamp, a radio and toilet. Dan Jaimun persists in his younger sister to visit his room. Meals are left outside the door. His father said Jaimun got angry in 1969 when the parents refused to buy him a motorcycle.

Topless carwash offers buff and shine

TORONTO (R) — Toronto's first topless car wash opened at the weekend, offering a 10-minute wash by two topless women for about \$8 dollars (U.S.), including tax and tip. Police in the Canadian city said the car wash will be investigated to determine if there is any criminal offence involved. "We're not losing any sleep over it," a spokesman said. The owners could not immediately be reached for comment and an employee at the car wash declined to disclose who the topless washers are.

Police raise outcry by stripping prostitutes

BANGKOK (R) — Police in Thailand have touched off an outcry after saying they ordered 13 prostitutes accused of robbing foreign tourists to strip to weed out the transvestites among them. The mass circulation Thai Rath newspaper said one of its photographers was surprised to see so many people naked when he visited the Bangkok police station where the suspects were held early Monday. The paper quoted Police Major General Rangsit Yanothai as saying the suspects were ordered to strip so police could photograph them for their files and identify the transvestites. Television and radio commentators said the police action was a violation of human rights. Rangsit was quoted as saying police had discovered three transvestites among the suspects accused of robbing foreign tourists in central Bangkok's Lumpini Park. He said the group picked their victims' pockets while embracing them or after slipping sleeping draughts into their drinks. Rangsit was quoted as saying foreigners usually did not recognise suspects after they had changed dress, but since having sex with a woman and a transvestite was different, photographs of the naked suspects might help identify them.

Court upholds award to Rock Hudson's lover

LOS ANGELES (R) — An appeals court Monday upheld an award of \$5.5 million to Marc Christian, former lover of Rock Hudson, who said the film star did not tell him he had AIDS. Christian has tested negative for HIV, the AIDS virus. But Judge Robert Devich wrote in the appeals court verdict: "We deal with the ultimate in personal horror — the fear of a slow, agonising, certain death." The court of appeals voted 3-0 to uphold the award from Hudson's estate made by the Los Angeles Superior Court in April 1989. State lawyers argued that the award was excessive and the trial jury prejudiced. Christian, 31, said he had been Hudson's lover for two years when he learned in 1985 Hudson had been diagnosed the previous year as having AIDS.

Koala beheaded for its blood

SYDNEY (R) — An Australian man, who police say is a former devil worshipper, beheaded a koala bear and drank its blood in a bizarre sacrifice, a court has been told. Robert Jones, 22, was committed to trial Monday on a charge of aggravated cruelty upon an animal in the northern New South Wales town of Port Macquarie, police said Tuesday. Jones has pleaded not guilty. Police told the court that Jones had told them he found the koala on a golf course on August 23, 1990, patted it, and then stabbed it five times in the neck. "Then I held it with one hand and cut its head off," Jones allegedly said in a statement to police.

مكتبة الأصل